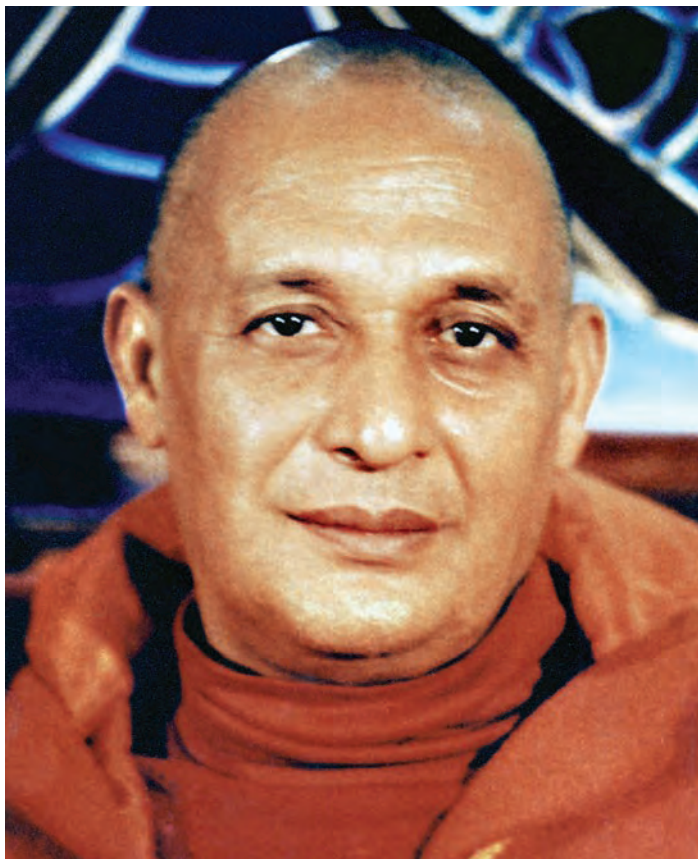


2013 Golden Jubilee edition

BIHAR YOGA®

Volume VI

Teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

Teachings of
Swami Satyananda
Saraswati
Volume VI



1963–2013
GOLDEN JUBILEE

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Teachings of Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Volume VI

*Satsangs, lectures and interviews given by
Swami Satyananda Saraswati during visits to Greece
1978, 1981, 1982, 1984 and 1985.*



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

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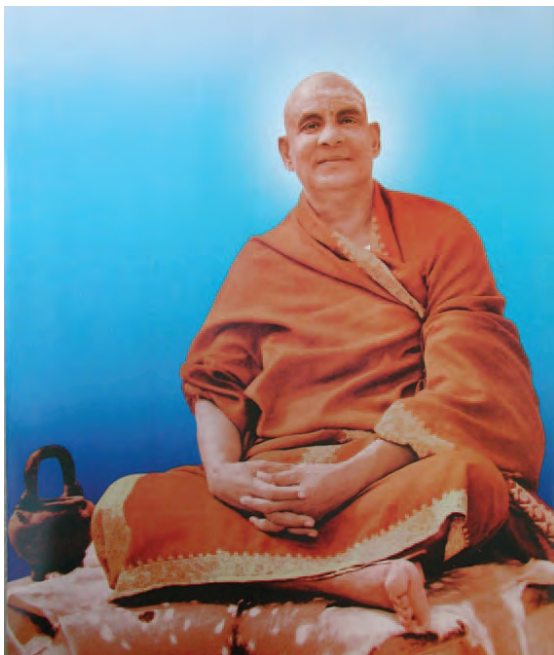
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Dedication

*In humility we offer this dedication to
Swami Sivananda Saraswati, who initiated
Swami Satyananda Saraswati into the secrets of yoga.*

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The self Socrates talked about is nameless, formless. It is in you but it is universal, it has no limitation. What is its form? Is it light? Is it sound? Is it knowledge? Well, that you have to find out for yourself. Human life has been given to you for that purpose. The purpose of life is to know the self.

—*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

1

Opening Lecture on Yoga

Royal Olympic Hotel, Athens, Greece, 17 January 1978

Hari Om Tat Sat to everybody and greetings from India. We are old friends and have cherished this friendship through a long passage of history. More than three thousand years ago history was a witness that Greece and Bihar, where I come from, had close diplomatic and other connections. The daughter of the General Commander Seleucus, Helena, was married to Chandragupta in Bihar three thousand years ago. So, I come from your daughter's home, which is also the home of modern yogic culture.

The scientific concept of yoga took its roots from Bihar. If you look at a map of India, you will find on the extreme east lies Calcutta and Bihar, and north of that is Kathmandu, Nepal. That is the place which is the home of modern scientific yoga. Yoga is an ancient science, a universal science designed to give a healthy body and healthy mind to every man. The great thinkers were very much concerned about the welfare of man. This concern led to the discovery of a procedure which is now known as the great science of yoga, which has immense potential for human welfare.

It should be understood by everyone that yoga is not an oriental culture, but a universal culture. With the advancement of civilization, as tensions grow, man will be under stress and strain, and he will need a new approach to

treatment. This is precisely the reason why modern medical science is now facing a challenge and is unable to ameliorate the sufferings of mankind in general.

Yoga as therapy

The arena of human suffering has changed. For instance, there was a time when asthma could be due to congestion in the lungs due to bronchial pneumonia, and its treatment with medicines like cortisone and adrenaline could help the patient. Today, cortisone has failed; adrenaline has also failed. Why? Because the arena of the disease has changed. Today, asthma is not due to complications in lungs; it is due to complications in the emotional personality of man. The same thing can be said about asthenia, angina pectoris and blood pressure. More than ninety percent of diseases today originate from the mind. If the diseases originate from the mind, is it scientific to treat them with medicines? If the diseases originate in the mind and emotions, should we not discover a new way of therapy? This is precisely the reason that yoga has captured mankind like wildfire.

Yoga – western culture need not exist with yoga; western culture has to accept yoga. There should be no difficulty. Many people wonder how the man in the West is going to adjust to the philosophy of the East. My reply is very simple: in the same way as the West has accepted the religion from the East. After all, Christianity is not a western religion; it has come from the Orient, but being a great thought, being a great revelation, it has redeemed the whole of the West. In the same way, the yoga system will be accepted by western people more and more. We are now thinking that yoga could possibly be used as a new method of therapy.

Meditation

There is a scientific basis behind my statement. When I talk about yoga therapy, I do not mean the way we treat a patient in a hospital. For me, yoga therapy does not mean hatha yoga or just a few asanas; even meditation can be used as

a potential method of self-treatment. Meditation is one of the most important aspects of yoga. In meditation, when you withdraw your mind and still your body, at that time, absolute revolutionary change is taking place within you.

One thing that has been seen is that in the depths of meditation, alpha activity becomes intensified. The brain has electrical impulses: alpha, delta, beta, theta. They are the waves in the brain. These waves operate in different cycles per second. They have a certain voltage. Alpha intensity in the brain indicates the tranquillity of the mind. When the EEG (electroencephalogram) indicates an intensity of alpha waves in the brain, it means the pressure in the heart is reduced.

I'm not going to teach you science here, I'm just giving you an indication. If you meditate and your alpha waves are intensified, you are going to control your coronary diseases and you can check your high blood pressure. At the time you are meditating, the metabolism of the body is completely revolutionized. Scientists in Europe, Poland, America and India are observing the changes that take place during the practice of meditation.

Asanas

Apart from meditation, if you take the subject of asanas and pranayama, it will take you years to understand how the practices of asanas and pranayama can restructure the body. Asanas are certain physical postures and there are as many as 84,000. We teach you a maximum of eighty-four, but you only need to practise two, three or four. For instance, if one has sciatica or slipped disc, one can practise only three asanas which will take a maximum of five minutes.

Pranayama

Pranayama is the breathing system. *Prana* means 'life force'. *Pranayama* means to make the life force expand. It is a process of breathing in and controlling the breath, and breathing out. I must tell you that we should never pass

over the practice of asanas and pranayama. They are most important and basic yoga practices for everybody.

In this physical body there are two great forces: one is called the life force, the other is called the mental force. The life force and the mental force is what I am and you are. If there is any imbalance between these two forces it can cause a physical disease or a mental disease and can take you to the mental hospital. It can also create cancer. Therefore, in yoga we say that balance, harmony, a concord and accord must be affected between the life force and the mental force. If there is an excess of life force and less of mental force a man becomes a terrorist, he becomes a criminal. If there is more mental force and less life force, he becomes crazy and goes to the mental hospital.

These two forces in yoga are known as ida and pingala. I call them the life and the mind. They are also known as the moon and the sun. In old symbolism you will have seen the two serpents crossing each other at five or more points and joining somewhere at the top. This is the symbol for the two forces coming into accord with each other. Now, how to create harmony and balance between these two great forces in our personality?

An integrated approach

There are two systems: one is called hatha yoga and the other is raja yoga. Hatha yoga is concerned with the body, the nervous system, the glands and the brain. Raja yoga is concerned with the subconscious mind, the psychic body, the unseen mind, the subliminal personality, the 'id' of Freud. The unseen mind that comes in dreams, the unseen mind that comes in meditation – that is the mind which one has to realize. A simple way is to concentrate the mind and transcend time and space, name and form. This is meditation and this is raja yoga.

With the combination of hatha yoga and raja yoga we can find an absolute structure of yoga therapy. With the changing pattern of society, with the stresses and strains

we are facing today, the meaning of disease has changed, the causes have changed, the whole ideology has changed. Scientists will have to recast their definitions; they will have to find a new approach to therapy. Yoga will have a place in man's physical and mental welfare.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What brings you to Greece?

Firstly, I don't have to praise Greece because this is the land of my ancestors. I belonged to this country in one of my incarnations. If you have any doubt, ask the clairvoyants of this country, they will say, "Swami Satyananda was in Greece in one of his incarnations."

What is meditation?

It is a process of losing and gaining. It is a process of becoming great. When you stick to name and form, when you stick to limitations, you are microcosmic. When you lose name and form and become one with the One, you become macrocosmic. Meditation is a process in which the little individual, the little ego, becomes one with the cosmic ego.

From philosophy and religion we have been taught that we can unite with the Cosmic One, through logos from the Bible and good deeds, not through meditation. Can you please explain this point?

It has never been said that through yoga we don't ascend, although it is true that one can ascend through good deeds. In the Bible, what is that ladder that goes to heaven? What does "By God I swear I die every night" mean? What is that heaven that a man ascends to? What is the light of St Gabriel? Meditation in the Bible is as important as it is in yoga, but a good life and good actions are equally important. That is why in raja yoga they have truth, non-violence, celibacy and so many good deeds – yama and niyama.

The very first words of the Bible say, “In the beginning there was the word and the word was with God.” This is the subject matter of nada yoga. So, with humility, I would say the Bible teaches a complete life. It doesn’t teach exclusion. On one side it teaches us to transcend, go to heaven and be with God. At the same time, service of humanity, compassion and benevolence are also given a due place.

I would like to ask about the practice of antar mouna.

This is a very small question, but a very powerful one. When you try to concentrate, what happens? The mind begins to jump. The more you try to concentrate, the more the mind will jump. If you try to control the mind, it will put you out. Therefore, in yoga they say practise antar mouna and, if the thoughts come in your mind, let them come. If you are practising a mantra, if you are concentrating on a symbol or the breath, go on and if your mind is wandering, let it wander. Don’t control the mind. Good thoughts, all right; evil thoughts, all right; divine thoughts, all right – no confrontation with the mind.

This is called *antar mouna*, inner silence. This is a trick to play with the mind, because the law of the mind is that the more you control it, the more it runs out, but if you leave the mind it comes back. So, when you are practising concentration or when you are repeating your mantra or reciting your prayers, do not tighten your mind. Recite the mantra, say it loudly. Say your prayers, recite them loudly and with a little bit of attention, try to find out what is happening in the mind.

This is antar mouna; *antar* means ‘interior’, *mouna* means ‘silence’. So, esoteric silence is antar mouna. It means you have to silence the mind. You do not fight with the mind because the mind which is trying to control the mind is the same mind which is wandering. If you try to hold a confrontation with the mind you are creating a split and this can later develop into schizophrenia. The mind is our friend, but we must know how to make use of it. The mind is not our

enemy, why should we fight it? Therefore, when I practise my mantra and all kinds of thoughts come, I allow them, I permit them. This is antar mouna.

From the contact I have with Hindus abroad, I have noticed that they have great calmness and goodness which is not generally found among Christians. On the other hand, the early Christians, from what we read, had great love and peace in them. In the guru's opinion, what is it that Christians have lost so that they have become as they are today, having fought two world wars?

I think everybody knows it, but let me say it, "One does not live by bread alone." The swamis in India perform austerities for ten or twelve years. They live the life of a Christian, self-imposed poverty, absolute obedience to a guru and chastity. They don't eat meat, they don't drink and they don't take fat or oil. They live in seclusion, practise yoga and control their thoughts. They don't associate with politics, they practise renunciation. That is why they have brilliance of spirit.

In the olden days of Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Andreas, Saint Paul, Saint Domingo and so many others – do you know how they were living? They were not living in the great monasteries, they were only living in small huts. You know the name of the man in Athens who used to live in a wine drum? They threw his drum away, but somebody bought another one for him. People thought he was crazy, but he was great. How did Socrates live? Did he live in a monastery? He used to have quarrels with his wife every day. Likewise, these saints suffered. They suffered physically. They suffered for others and they purified their body by fasting and penance. That is why these old saints in Christianity were beaming with brilliance, but please remember that saints are never Hindu or Christian, they are never registered. I was born in a Hindu family, but I am not a Hindu. If I had been born in a Christian family I would not be a Christian today. I am not Hindu, I am not Muslim, not Arab, not Christian, not man, not woman – I am Self, Self, Self.

What are mantras and how do they act?

Mantra is a psychic word. It is a revelation to a yogi in the depths of meditation. These mantras, when they are recited, influence the cosmic mind and the unconscious. Everybody has a mantra of their own, but we do not know it. The guru tells us which mantra we should repeat. The mantra is a vehicle for spiritual transcendence.

Can you explain to us what the self is?

Self is what I am, the basis of my existence, the background of my awareness and the fact of my continuity. Self is one thing that continues behind all the changes. The body is changing, the mind is changing, experiences are changing, concepts, values and philosophy are changing, but I am the same as I was thirty or forty years ago. The external manifestation of the spirit is all that changes.

This spirit has to be realized in samadhi. You should be able to arrive at a point where you do not experience name and form. You should come to a point of awareness where you are not aware of name and you are not aware of form. At that time the spiritual experience takes place. No matter how much you discuss the self, you will not know it. Self can only be known by experience and this knowledge must take place only in samadhi.

Trying to follow the systems strengthens the ego. Is this not an impediment to becoming aware of the self?

Yes, yes. First you strengthen the ego, then you transcend it. Just as when you have a thorn in your foot, you use another thorn to take it out and then throw both away. You see, the isolation of mind has to take place. Just as in a physical body, say with cancer, you first isolate the problem in one area. In the same manner, isolation of mind has to take place at one point, otherwise the mind will be dissipated here, there and everywhere. The mental force has to be consolidated and integrated or centralized at one point, then transcendence is possible.

2

Satsang

At the home of Vasilius and Lilian Papathanassopoulou, 18 January 1978

Could we say that a philosopher is one who is inventing the truth while a yogi speaks truth?

Socrates was not a philosopher, he was a knower of the truth, whereas Plato was a political philosopher and Marcus Aurelius was a yogi, but he had a philosophy. I also have a philosophy, but I am not a philosopher. The yogi is experiencing the truth and the philosopher is trying to explain the order of the realization of truth. Just like a politician plays politics, but he doesn't know anything, while a political philosopher gives an explanation, an interpretation of the system of philosophy, he organizes it and has an epistemology.

The word *yoga* means 'union'. When we use the word *yoga* we always mean a path that brings you nearer to your spirit. So, when we say *jnana yoga* we mean the way of union through the path of enquiry. *Raja yoga* means the way of union by the process of esoteric realization; *bhakti yoga* is a path of union through devotion. Similarly, karma yoga, kundalini yoga, tantra and mantra yoga are different paths by which one arrives at the same point; just like in a circle we travel through radii to the point.

Do you think God is a person or the real source from which everything comes? Does God have any existence, is it a matter of experience or is it something different which is beyond our experience, our mind?

God is beyond mind, beyond experience, but it is an experience. I'm not talking from the books. For me, this entire existence, the whole of creation that is seen and that is not seen, is immanent with, or emanates from, a divine principle. Organic, inorganic, living or dead, sentient or insentient – as far as I know there is no point in the universe devoid of this divine principle. Man is very fortunate because he is able to think about God, whereas other objects in this world are permeated through and through by a divine principle, but they are not aware of it. Man has become aware of it and he has been working on this adventure right from the beginning of human civilization.

Now we have come to the conclusion that there is a divine experience, far beyond the sensual experience, very different from the mental experience of pain and pleasure, from the emotional experience of love and hate and from the sleep experience. The divine experience does not depend on any sense of the mind. It is an independent experience. When we transcend the mind and the body, then the divine experience comes to realization.

This divine experience which I have is personal. I have that divine experience, you don't have it and others don't have it. When I have that divine experience, I no longer remain an experiencer – that's the point. When salt merges with water it becomes water. In the same way, when the experiencer experiences non-empirical, divine experience, he no longer exists. The knower of Brahman, the knower of God, becomes God, loses his individuality, loses his limitations. That is the divine experience which is personal experience.

For me, that is God because that is the only final thing that I can apprehend. For me, I am only talking about myself, it is not possible to apprehend God in any

human form although I know that He is in everyone. He is immanent, He is transcendent. He is immanent in everything, He is beyond also. At the same time I think it is good to have respect, devotion, submission and surrender to any human being in the form of a guru, saviour, emancipator or spiritual guide. However, if you ask me what is the real form of God at the point of realization – some say light, some say knowledge, but I think the best word is experience. Experience of what? Experience of totality, experience of oneness – one without a second.

It is so difficult; that experience cannot be interpreted here. If you have eaten sugar and I have never eaten it, you are not going to effectively explain it to me even if you write a big thesis on it. In the same manner, if I have experienced God and you have not experienced it, I can never explain and you can never understand.

Did you say the universe was devoid or divine?

No point in creation is devoid of reality. You see, we will all have to think about all these matters right from the beginning. Everyone who is a seeker has to rethink everything afresh, from the start, because our minds are clouded by so many philosophies. Some say one thing, others say the other thing and we don't know what to believe. If I believe in one, I disbelieve in another, but maybe that is right and I am wrong, so we have to start right from the beginning. Where do we start? We can't just say, "God is an experience." That is a fatal idea. What I said just now helps nobody because that is an experience in samadhi. It can only give you inspiration. It can give you a kind of revelation, but it can't bring experience to you.

If you want experience, first of all the instruments of experience must be purified. Unless your mirror is clean and clear can you ever see your face? Unless the intuition is developed, you can never see God. Intuition, the inner eye, develops through meditation. You have to develop the inner eye because now we are blind. We have physical eyes, through

which we see forms, but we have no inner eyes, therefore we don't see anything beyond those forms. How to develop the inner eye is the first thing that you have to master. Before you settle the nature of God, his characteristics, attributes, glory, etc., you must first settle the point of intuition. How are you going to open your inner eye?

Are you afraid of death or physical pain?

Death is only a transition, I have seen it as a transition. When I leave this house I go to a better house or a smaller house, whichever I like.

Isn't that a personal belief?

It is not a personal belief. It is knowledge.

Let's say personal knowledge?

Yes.

Have you died in samadhi?

Yes, if you discuss evolution, what does it mean? Evolution is a constant motion, a very, very slow motion, one motion, mingling into another. It is not a change. The physical body has been evolving right from childhood. It has been evolving in such a way that we don't see it. We always think of evolution in terms of transformation, transition, metamorphosis and so in evolution; there is no death. If you take death to be destruction, then the very philosophy or theory of evolution is false; you have to accept there is no evolution – finish it off. But evolution is there, you can't finish it off. Nature is evolving, mind and emotions are evolving, everything seems to be in motion and therefore death is just an exit. It is a point where evolution enters another phase.

How can we cope with physical pain and illness?

It is possible that, by controlling the mind, we can transcend physical pain and you can always witness it. I'll give you an

example. If a thorn pricks you, you get terrible pain. The same thorn pricks him, but he doesn't get the same intensity; he gets less than you. The same thorn pricks somebody else – he just takes it out and throws it away. That's all the pain he gets. Then there's the person who panics for days when a thorn pricks him. So, the experience, the intensity, the response to pain is relative, depending on human sensitivity. Some people feel more and some feel less. I think that my sensitivity to pain and pleasure has been too low in voltage. I have not responded extremely to either pain or pleasure. Now it is very slow, I just know it, but I feel it's natural, just natural. Not that I tried to achieve it, but I think gradually it has become like that. If I fall down the steps, I just go back to my room. There is no use thinking about the pain because the pain is not in the body, the pain is here in the mind.

If something wonderful happens to you, how do you react?

Ah, many wonderful things have happened in my life.

You said you feel no pleasure.

There is no use feeling pleasure. I say it is happening, that's all. What can I do?

Do you enjoy this situation?

I see this situation as a witness. Just as I witness your pain and pleasure, I witness my pain and pleasure, because I know it is not external, it is internal. The sugar is so tasty; it is tasty in the mind not on the tongue.

Is it because you think that if you give importance to pleasure it will turn to pain later on?

No, I have never thought that. In my life I have always been a pleasure seeker. For me life is beautiful. I have never hated life. I have never hated anything in my life, in anyone's life. I don't like the people who say "Oh, it is wretched." I say "No, it is not wretched," because everything is created through a divine process. The matter, the energy, prana,

water, fire, earth, everything is created by a divine process. How can anything be abominable? Therefore, right from the beginning of my life, I have always been a pleasure seeker. I have never run away from pleasure. Perhaps that is one of the reasons that I have become blunt; I am not able to feel it.

Swamiji, you say that we are in the process of evolution. If the soul is perfect and it's not the body that is necessarily involved from life to life, what exactly would you call that part of our being which is in the process of evolution?

The consciousness of man, the atman itself. Atman is perfect, but evolution is still going on, it doesn't matter. You see, the energy is dormant in matter. It is not in a manifested state. At a point of evolution, the energy becomes separate from matter and then it is pure energy. This energy is the same energy as it was in the fold of matter. There is no difference as far as the structure of energy is concerned, but as far as the manifestation of state is concerned, there is a difference. At that time it was *nirakara*, 'formless'. Now it is *sakara*, 'with form'. After the process of fission the energy has become separate, it has become sakara; it has become concrete. In the same manner the spirit is always the same, but it is undergoing a process of evolution because it is in the fold of matter.

How did this happen?

Oh, that I don't know. I must be honest with you, this question I have never answered. I have read many books in the past, but I have never found an answer. I have met with very important people of my generation: Swami Sivananda, Swami Aurobindo, Swami Ramana Maharshi, Swami Ramdas, Ananda Mai, as many people as I could. We are contemporaries. They said, "Keep quiet." This is the mystery. This perhaps He alone knows. Why this creation? What is the fun of spiritual life? What is the fun of emancipation? What is hell and heaven? What is bondage and freedom? Why should He create this kind of drama? Why is He doing it and is He doing it or not? If he has created, does He know that

he created? There are so many millions of people who are happy and there are so many millions of people suffering. Does he know that He put these people into this state and now they have become part of their act? These are some of the questions I have thought about a lot, but at a point I found a great barricade, a great boundary wall. I stopped thinking. With this question, I honestly say I do not know. I am sure you will also not know.

When we accept that we are souls, we are atman, and we want to realize it, is it then only a question of time and purification, practising the asanas, pranayama, meditation and desiring them?

It is just a question of time. You see, we are what we are – a thing in itself. After realization we are going to realize just the same thing. Just as if you have a very valuable thing in your pocket and you are searching for it all over and finally you find it in your pocket and you say “Hey, it was here!”

There is a beautiful allegory. There is a deer in India called the musk deer. It has musk in its navel and there is a period when it matures. When this musk is matured it wafts fragrance; the aroma hovers all over. Now the deer starts smelling it. It likes the smell so much it tries to find out where it is. So it smells this side, runs to the right and smells again, and tries to locate the smell to the left. In the process of locating the smell, the deer runs so much that ultimately he gets tired and never finds the smell, and dies.

All the time it is here. That is happening to all of us. Just as the fragrance is embedded in the flower and your reflection in the mirror, in the same way reality is inherent here. You have to search for it within and not outside. He’s outside too, He’s everywhere, but you have to search for Him within. If we do not do it we will have the same problem as the deer that has the fragrance within, but can’t find it. He goes all round the forest and finally dies. He doesn’t get it, but a hunter gets it.

3

Meditation

Royal Olympic Hotel, Athens, Greece, 18 January 1978

This evening I have some attractive topics for you concerning yoga. In fact, to explain the true significance of yoga we will have to tell you a lot about the science of meditation. All the forms of yoga are preparation for dhyana yoga, the yoga of meditation. The practice of hatha yoga purifies the body, the practice of bhakti yoga purifies the emotional personality and the practice of jnana yoga purifies the intellect. After these practices you take to the practice of meditation.

When you close your eyes, what do you see inside? Consciousness, we see consciousness inside. Beyond the body is the mind and beyond the mind is the spirit. The purpose of meditation is to discover the unseen spirit in man. Through meditation we are able to transcend the world of name and form, then we can come to a world which has no boundaries and no limitations. Therefore, we should remember that meditation is like a bridge which takes us from this shore to the other shore.

Man has discovered hundreds of sciences throughout history and, through these sciences, he has uncovered the mysteries of nature and matter, but the greatest science that man has discovered is the science of meditation. Matter is not the ultimate, mind is not the ultimate, thought is not the ultimate substance, emotion is not the ultimate aspect of

the activity of the mind. Even as a scientist in physics is able to split matter and release nuclear energy, in the same way, in meditation a yogi splits the mind and releases spiritual energy. Matter is composed of elements. The mind is also composed of many elements. Mind is not one entity, mind is a composition. When a scientist splits matter he separates it into the component elements. In the same way, in meditation we separate the elements of the mind.

Emotion is one element and when you sit for meditation so many thoughts come into your mind. They are the composition of the mind and therefore in meditation you should never control the mind. I want to repeat it again. In meditation, the mind should not be suppressed, thoughts should not be blocked. If you are concentrating upon a rose, the sound of *Om*, the cross or Christ, or upon your guru or your God, you must remember that many thoughts will come in your mind. That's natural and correct, and it should happen. If they don't come there is something wrong.

That is where everybody is making a mistake. They think that if you concentrate on the rose, only the rose should be there, but the purpose of a mantra, the purpose of concentration, pranayama, yoga, is not to suppress the mind; it is to explore the mind. Everything must come out: past memories, visions of the future, all your problems, all that you know, all that you can think about must come out. That is called the practice of pratyahara. That is called the practice of raja yoga in which you are expressing the whole mind, from subliminal depths to the conscious plane. Therefore, when you take a mantra you must allow your mind to function. How long can the mind function? How long will the distractions remain? Finally the mind will be transcended. Therefore, in the yoga of meditation we consider the mind as a substance and express the whole mind. Finally it will be transcended.

Breath awareness

The whole process is a very simple one. There are not many systems of meditation. Meditation is a systematic process. It

begins with awareness of the breath, that's point one. The breath is natural. In one minute we breath fifteen times; in one hour, nine hundred times; in twenty-four hours, 21,600 times. You have to do nothing except watch your breath. You can do it even now. You don't have to concentrate your mind. Awareness of breath is different from concentration on the breath.

When you practise awareness of breath focusing on your nostrils, that is point two. You can concentrate on the breath between the navel and throat, creating an imaginary mental passage between the navel and the throat, that is point three. You can concentrate on the deeper breath in the spinal column, point four. You can concentrate on the breath from the eyebrow centre back to the pineal gland and from the pineal gland forward to the mid-eyebrow centre. That is the fifth point. When you practise awareness of the breath gradually through these five systems, you are developing your awareness, you are not suppressing your mind.

Now, with the breath, you should integrate your mantra. Firstly the mantra can be integrated with the natural breath. Then the mantra can be integrated in the passage between the navel and the throat. The mantra can be integrated in the spinal column and the mantra can be integrated between the mid-eyebrow centre and the pineal gland, back and forth.

There are three types of breathing: one is the natural breath, second is deeper than natural and third is the deep breath. What is natural breath? You know it. You have been practising since your birth. I don't have to teach that. What is deeper than natural? You know that too. Sometimes you practise this when you are deeply asleep. The third breath I will tell you about. It is known as ujjayi pranayama in hatha yoga, and is produced by contracting the glottis of the throat and making a sound. This pranayama is practised by the cat and we practise it in deep sleep. When you are able to practise awareness in the spinal column, then you must start ujjayi pranayama.

Now, kindly listen to both the English and the Greek: spinal cord, spondiliki styli. The top of the spinal cord is behind the mid-eyebrow centre at the back of the brain. The bottom of the spinal cord is in the coccyx. You have to practise awareness of breath from the bottom to the top. Your consciousness has to travel from the bottom to the top with the help of your breath. How do you do it? When you breath in you ascend, when you breath out, descend. This is called the ascending and descending of consciousness and it has to be done with the help of ujjayi pranayama.

They say, “Think *Soham* with the breath.” When you ascend with the breath, think *So* and when you descend with the breath think *Ham* – this becomes *Soham*. Then sit down quietly with awareness of the deep breath and include one more practise. Fold your tongue and lightly press it to the upper palate. In hatha yoga this is known as khechari mudra. Keep on practising it for ten minutes. Let thoughts come in the mind, it does not matter. Let visions pass across the mind, it does not matter. If you begin to sleep, it does not matter; you have to do nothing but breathe up and down with *Soham*. At the end you must concentrate between the eyebrows. This is a simple practise in meditation.

There are many other systems of meditation. You can practise them gradually, but the important thing is how to fix your awareness and therefore this is the basic practice. This will make your consciousness spontaneous and when the consciousness becomes spontaneous it becomes dynamic. The most important thing to be remembered in dhyana yoga is that we are not going to make the mind passive, but we are going to make it dynamic. The meaning of meditation, of *dhyana yoga*, is ‘the way of union by developing your awareness’.

Mantra

Mantra is most important in dhyana yoga. You cannot grow a vegetable without a seed. In the same manner, meditation cannot succeed without a mantra and everyone has their

own mantra. You have to discover your mantra. It is a sound, a syllable, a vibration. What is vibration? Vibration is consolidated in sound; sound is dissipated in vibration and this sound is the basis of the universe. We say that this sound is eternal and this sound is occult. There are many sounds which we cannot hear, and these mantras are revealed in deep meditation and samadhi. When you meditate and transcend name and form you are in samadhi. At that time certain words are revealed to you and that is your mantra. You don't have to get it from anyone; if you transcend, the mantra is with you. Also, if you practise the sound *Om* for ten minutes you can find a difference in your state of mind. From this it is to be understood that everyone who wants to achieve a high state of mind must have their own mantra.

Sitting posture

For meditation you must sit with your spinal cord upright and straight. An easy chair will not do and lying down on the back will not do. The spinal cord is important. Within the spinal cord are the three greatest nerve channels which control the physical energy, the mental energy and the spiritual energy. The names of these nadis are ida, pingala and sushumna. *Ida* is the mental energy, *pingala* is the life force and *sushumna* is spiritual awareness. These three nadis are enshrined in the spinal column. Therefore, when you are sitting for meditation the spinal cord must be upright and straight, and tensionless.

Mooladhara chakra

When you are meditating, nothing is happening in the brain, nothing is happening in the stomach, nothing is happening anywhere in the body. Everything is happening at just one point in the perineum between the excretory and urinary systems. In kundalini yoga it is known as mooladhara chakra. In the masculine body it is near the surface of the perineum; in the feminine body it is at the opening of the uterus, the cervix.

Now, this is an important point: all that is happening in meditation concerns the energy in mooladhara chakra and

the awakening that takes place there. Remember, energy is dormant in mooladhara chakra. That is the seat of kundalini and the dormant potential energy in man. When awakening takes place in mooladhara chakra, awakening takes place in the brain centre. In the brain there are centres of intuition, however you cannot awaken the brain without awakening mooladhara chakra. The switch is in mooladhara chakra. You switch it on and the light burns, there is no other way.

There is one switch in mooladhara chakra and in total there are six switches, not seven. When you know how to switch them on, the light can burn in your brain and the purpose of meditation is to awaken the dormant potential energy in mooladhara chakra. Therefore, there are two asanas which are presented for meditation. One asana is known as *padmasana*, the lotus posture, most of you might know it. The other is known as *siddhasana*, the perfect posture. You must practise meditation in either of these two, but *siddhasana* is best.

Evolution

I have just spoken a little bit about meditation. I don't consider this to be a thesis, it is an introduction and then you can read my books on meditation. Everything else that man is doing, animals can also do. What makes man different is meditation. We people are talking about evolution. How do we evolve? What is the way? By thinking do we evolve? No. By meditation we evolve. Which way should we progress, outward or inward? Inward. Inward progress is evolution. Outward progress is not evolution. When man becomes extrovert he falls from the Garden of Eden. When man becomes introvert he ascends to heaven. It is because of this that meditation is a science by which man can evolve into a superman. Superman is your destiny. Superman is a man who lives with intuition, with inner awareness.

Don't be afraid of meditation. It is very difficult. How hard it is for man to transcend name and form, to transcend the objective consciousness, but that is the ultimate destiny.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What are dharana and dhyana?

Dharana is one of the stages leading to *dhyana*, meditation. It is a practice of pictorial conception. For the mind there are three bases: the gross base, the base of the idea and the occult base. When you concentrate on your guru, that is the gross basis. When you concentrate on any object like Christ, a cross or a rose, that is a concrete basis because you can see it. The second type of base is the basis of an idea; you think of eternity, infinity, bliss and develop that as a base. Third, you concentrate your mind on the unseen, or on unheard sounds, or you fix your mind on some of the occult centres of the body or on some of the forms you cannot see. This is called the occult base. When you concentrate on any of these symbols, it is called dharana.

You said that there are six switches that turn on the light in the brain. One is in the perineum. Where are the other five?

I have spoken to you about the first switch. The second is a little above that one. It is in the sacral joint at the end of the spinal cord, at the junction where the tailbone begins. This is known as swadhisthana chakra. The third one, manipura chakra, is behind the navel in the spinal cord. It is also known as the solar plexus. The fourth one, behind the heart, is known as anahata chakra, the star of David. The Jews knew it very well. The fifth switch, vishuddhi chakra, is in the neck. The sixth is in the medulla oblongata, situated behind the mid-eyebrow centre at the point where the pineal gland is placed – ajna chakra. Out of these six switches, the most important is mooladhara chakra and the next important is ajna. Knowledge about these chakras can be gained by the study of kundalini yoga.

What is the connection between meditation and the three bodies: the physical, the astral and the mental?

Meditation makes the consciousness travel or traverse from the gross body to the astral body, to the causal body.

Meditation develops the finer bodies. In ordinary beings the gross body is predominant and more powerful. Through meditation you try to make your astral body more powerful and by constant meditation you can develop the powers of the astral body.

Why do visions, thoughts and smells come? Are they real?

When the consciousness departs from the gross body and the astral body develops, then the signs occur. Yes, they are real.



4

Introduction to the Science of Yoga

Epimeliterio, Kalamata, 19 January 1978

First of all I bring you greetings from India. The relations between Greece and India are rooted in remote history. More than three thousand years ago, our countries had a very great diplomatic, cultural and political relationship. Not only that, even marital relations took place between the people of Greece and the people of India, as when the daughter of Seleucus, the general of Alexander the Great, was married to Emperor Chandragupta. In India we know a great deal about your culture. I have studied Greek mythology. I've studied Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius, and I personally feel that the people of India and the people of Greece are spiritually one unit. You may feel that you have a different religion, but in India we do not feel like that and so I bring you the greetings of India.

There is a great science which we have forgotten. Our ancestors, hundreds and thousands of years ago, knew a lot about this science, but there seems to have been political accidents and we forgot all about that great science. Frankly speaking, I don't teach religion. I have respect for all religions and I think it is necessary for one to practise a religion for evolution. I personally believe it is important for everybody to pray, but I see a problem, and the problem is how to make the mind quiet.

Modern-day suffering

In the world today there is tension. Man has become restless. People are not able to sleep without tranquilizers. There is a great conflict between religion and modern civilization, and man is completely torn between these two great forces. The great doctors, scientists and psychologists say that today man has become the victim of schizophrenia and neurosis. The most advanced countries like America and the wealthy countries like Sweden have people going crazy. People are going mad and have become abnormal. The rate of suicide, the number of people who are suffering from high blood pressure or heart attack, is growing every day. Medical science is a great science, but it has not found an answer. It has not been able to cure insomnia; it has not been able to give peace of mind; it has not been able to help us in integrating our personalities. What more can I say?

So, what to do? We believe in religion. I am a Hindu, you are a Christian, but Hindus, Christians and Muslims are all having mental problems today. You swear by the name of God – are you peaceful? Is your mind quiet? During the last forty years scientists have found that the potential of yoga is great. The practice of yoga can help you to achieve peace of mind. Scientists in America, France, Germany, Japan, India, Russia and Australia are looking into the possibilities of yoga.

Research into yoga

Here, in this assembly, we have a swami from Spain. He was exposed to scientific experiments at the University of Barcelona. The doctors and scientists experimented on him and investigated the condition of his heart and body in yoga postures. While he was practising pranayama they exposed him to the most modern, sophisticated instruments. He was also investigated whilst practising meditation.

The researchers of the university indicated that a great change took place in him during the practice of yoga. During the practice the alpha waves in his brain became

very clear and prominent. The alpha wave is very important. When your brain develops alpha waves, pressure from the heart is released and blood pressure comes down. So, if you take a subject with high blood pressure and ask him to practise certain yoga postures, the moment alpha waves increase, blood pressure falls. I'm not going to speak a lot about this investigation, I'm just giving you a hint on how yoga can help us physically as well as mentally.

What is yoga? Is it a religion? Is it a philosophy? Is it political? What is yoga? Yoga is a science. It is like mathematics. It can be proved. Yoga can accept the challenge of any science. When you are practising a yoga posture you can register the changes taking place in your body through scientific instruments. A scientist can tell you about your blood pressure, metabolism, respiration, consumption of oxygen and brainwaves. Therefore, people should not be afraid of yoga.

The yoga of balance

Yoga is divided into four sections. One is for the physical body, the second is for the life force, the third is relaxation and the fourth one is meditation. What does yoga mean? It means physical posture, breathing exercises, relaxation and meditation – these are the four sections of yoga.

Now what is the first one? Hatha yoga asanas, the physical postures. By holding a particular physical posture your glands are influenced. There are many glands in your body which have a great role to play in your health: thyroid gland, thymus gland, adrenals, pancreas, etc., and if there is an imbalance then physical and mental diseases take place. You must have seen the little boys and girls that suffer from epileptic fits, that is due to glandular imbalance. By the practise of these yoga postures you can bring about a balance in the glandular secretions.

If the body's nervous system is weak, one has a lot of problems. You must have seen a lot of women suffer from hysteria. Many people suffer from nervous breakdown or

nervous depression. There are certain ways in hatha yoga by which you can strengthen your nervous system.

The many asanas of hatha yoga can be learned from your teacher and I will be frank and say that by hatha yoga many, many diseases can be completely cured. It is a very effective system. It is necessary therefore that every one of you should study hatha yoga and, if you practise hatha yoga for a period of a month or two or three, you will find that you become energetic.

The second section is known as pranayama, which is the yoga of breathing. In this you breathe in such a way that you inhale more *prana*, more life force. This body is living on life force; if there is less of it we become weak. Therefore, in order to have more life force in the body, you must do the practice of pranayama.

The yoga of relaxation

The third section is relaxation and this is very important for all of you – for the doctors, engineers, businessman, housewives, politicians, whose minds are under constant strain. At the end of the day these people are tired and then what do they do? They are so tired that they can't sleep. They take alcohol, but after some time that also doesn't work, then they take tranquillizers. After some time that doesn't work. Then they take strong tranquillizers and then the heart is involved, then the nervous system is involved and what happens? After taking these tranquillizers for so many years they have heart disease.

In yoga there is a system of relaxation. You do not sleep, you just lie down and do a practice mentally. Within ten minutes you are relaxed. Relaxation is important. Please remember, sleep is not relaxation. You have to learn this art.

Yoga of the mind

The fourth section is meditation; how to concentrate the mind and make it steady and one-pointed. When you pray your mind is not steady. When you go to the sanctum

sanctorum your mind is wandering. Meditation teaches you how to concentrate your mind on one point and, once you learn how to meditate, you learn the art of life.

The most difficult thing in life is meditation, but once you know how to meditate, once you know how to concentrate, you are fortunate. The mind is very powerful, but when it is dissipated it is weak. The rays of the sun when they fall on the earth are weak, but when concentrated by a fine lens they are capable of burning anything. When the mind is scattered it is incapable, but when the same mind is concentrated by meditation it becomes powerful.

Yoga has many systems of concentration. You can concentrate your mind through breath, through a sound, or by fixing it on any of the centres of the body. You can concentrate your mind by fixing it on a particular symbol, but the easiest way I can tell you about is by fixing your mind on the natural breath.

Practice

How long should hatha yoga be practised? A maximum of fifteen minutes. Section two: how long to practise pranayama? Five minutes. Section three: how long to practise relaxation? Maximum half an hour. Section four: how long to practise meditation? Maximum ten minutes. Now a question: should we practise all four or should we practise one of them? If you are tense, if you are tired, you must practise section one and two. If you want to concentrate your mind, practise section four for ten minutes. Section three can be practised by anybody, at any time, for any length of time.

This was a very short introduction to yoga for all of you. Finally, yoga has come up as a science. It is not a religion, but pure science. Yoga is a science of the body and the mind. It has no restrictions. Whether you are a vegetarian or a non-vegetarian, married or not married, young or old, it does not matter. Whether you smoke or not does not matter; but it is important that you must learn yoga from a very competent teacher. A competent teacher means that he lives the life of

yoga and that he knows the science. Then he can tell you what you should practise. If you are suffering from sciatica or a slipped disc, he should know what you should practise; he should know what a diabetic must practise and he should also know what he should not do. This is very important – yoga should be learned, not from a book, but through a competent teacher.

As I told you in the beginning, our country and your country had very good relations in the past and we exchanged our cultures. Our people came to you and your people came to us. Our ancestors brought yoga to Greece and we took much from Greece's great culture back to India. Now the time has come again for us to unite and commune together.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Does food have an influence on the evolution of the mind?

No, yoga does not touch the subject of food for the evolution of man; he has to decide this question for himself.

Can someone start with meditation or must one start with the previous stages?

If you are able to sit quietly for ten minutes without any problems in the body, then you are able to start meditation directly.

What level of yoga are you teaching and to what level does it bring the mind?

I teach yoga from the point of the body, mind and spirit – all three. It takes one gradually from the gross level to the subtle level.

If someone has a disease and cannot be cured, can yoga make him well?

There are many psychosomatic diseases which are cured by yoga, but I must be frank, sometimes some diseases also cannot be cured by yoga.

If a young child of four or five has some disease and can't be taught yoga, what will happen?

For a child it is much better to go to medical therapy. For a person in a mental hospital it is much better that the authorities teach him yoga. In Denmark, yoga classes have helped the patients very much.

The word 'yoga' in Sanskrit means union with God, but you haven't said anything about that.

Yoga does not mean union with God. I will give you a quotation from the scriptures. The *Raja Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali has the following definition: "To have control over the functioning of the mind is yoga." Literally, *yoga* means equilibrium, harmony, but definitely when the mind is controlled, harmony is established. Union between the lower soul and the higher soul takes place.

To practise yoga alone needs strength of will. Is one capable of doing yoga alone without help?

Yes, of course. Yoga has to be practised alone, but you need a teacher who can give you lessons.



5

Taming the Mind – Meditation

At the home of Mrs Nicky Hill, Kalamata, 20 January 1978

I will begin with a story. In the olden days there was a king who had four horses. These horses were untamed, unruly and undisciplined. Nobody could make use of the horses as they were very dangerous. The king announced the prize of half the kingdom and his daughter if someone could tame four horses. He also announced that if anyone failed to discipline the horses he would be kept in prison for his whole lifetime. Prince after prince came and tried to tame them, but not one of them could discipline the wild horses.

After a few years, four people came to the king and they said they could discipline the horses. The horses were given to them and they went out of the kingdom. One of them came back within an hour with a fractured hand, another gentleman came back at noon, bleeding throughout the body and the third came by 2 pm, completely exhausted. The fourth one didn't return.

Days passed, weeks passed, almost one year passed, the second year also passed and twelve years passed. It was taken for granted that he was dead, but one day they saw a man riding a horse galloping into the palace and they recognized the same man. He was riding the same horse. They were surprised to see the man riding the horse because it had been so undisciplined and wild. So they asked him how he could

control the horse. The man said, “First of all I followed the horse. Wherever the horse went, I went; whenever he rested, I rested; when he was grazing, I was cooking food for myself; I did not touch the horse. As the days passed, the horse became familiar with me and in about one year’s time I could get closer to the horse. In the second year I could touch the horse. In the third year I was able to feed the horse. In the fourth year I could hold the horse by a rein. By the fifth year I could put the saddle on him, by the sixth year I could mount, by the seventh year I could jump on him. By the eighth year I could make him move and by the ninth year I could make him understand how to turn right and left with the rein’s guidance. By the tenth year he could gallop with me and I could make him race. In ten years I controlled the horse and made him useful; for two years I was going around the country on the horse’s back, and today I am here.”

This is a very simple story, but it tells us the secret of meditation. In meditation the main thing is the mind. The mind is an undisciplined stuff. In man it is completely wild and full of dangers. In order to reach your goal in life it is necessary that you are able to control this horse. It is not possible now because the moment you sit for meditation the mind begins to jump, it kicks you and gives you kick after kick.

What policy should one adopt towards the mind in meditation? Exactly the same policy the man adopted with the horse. In the first stage you follow the mind, don’t try to control it. When you have followed the mind for a pretty long time, then you are able to handle it. If you interfere with the mind too much in the beginning it will never care for you. So, in the beginning when you sit for meditation, whatever thoughts come to you, let them come. It will take some time, maybe a year or two or even three, for the mind to purge those impressions. The mind is full of impressions embedded in the subconscious. Some of them come in dreams, some of them are expressed in your day-to-day life, but most of them come during times of concentration and meditation.

Throughout the day, when you are working in your business or shop, your mind is quiet, but the moment you close your eyes you see a host of thoughts coming from all around. Therefore never make the mistake of controlling the mind in the beginning; that would be the greatest mistake in meditation. The mind becomes quiet by itself. You repeat your mantra, the mind will be wandering, still you continue with your mantra. Maybe for half an hour you are repeating your mantra and the mind is wandering around, this does not matter. Do not pull it, do not withdraw the mind. You will find after a few months or maybe a year or two, when you are practising the mantra, the mind becomes quiet by itself. When the mind becomes quiet spontaneously, then you should start meditation.

Until you are able to exhaust your impressions, it is not possible to succeed in meditation. Therefore, those who want to succeed in meditation must practise mantra for a very, very long time. When the mind becomes quiet, then start meditation on a sound, a form, a symbol, the breath or in any of the psychic centres in the body and you will see that experiences will begin.

I must tell you again that when you are practising mantra it is like an act of purging. You may see your past; all the guilt in your mind will come out, all the abnormalities of your personality will also start coming out. At this time many people are disturbed very much because they expect everything too early and too quickly. People feel that the moment they close their eyes meditation should begin. When thoughts come in their mind they are greatly disappointed. There are people I know who have given up meditation because they say, "What can I do? When I practise mantra my mind becomes full of wanderings." It is because they do not know that the purging begins first. If you practise your mantra with pranayama, in a year or two your mind will become quiet spontaneously and when the mind becomes quiet you start your meditation.

What is meditation? To think of one thing at one time and nothing else is meditation. A second definition of

meditation is that you should be able to see the object in the mind clearly. If you are meditating on a rose, you should be able to see the rose inside as clearly as you see one with your eyes open. Really, that is meditation – to be able to see the object with the mind. Now I see all of you with my eyes, but when I close my eyes I don't see you, I can imagine, but in meditation one is to see.

One is able to see the object with the mind. Just as in a dream you see many things, in meditation, during consciousness, you see the object very clearly. In this meditation, if you are meditating on your guru, you can see the guru in front of you in flesh and blood. It is not imagination, it is materialization. The mind materializes itself in the form of your guru. It happens for a very short time, but even if you are able to see the object in meditation for the twinkling of an eye, that is enough.

Meditation is a most powerful state of mind. I can tell you now that there is nothing more important in life than meditation. When a person takes to meditation, there is nothing difficult for him in life. He is the happiest man ever created by God, he is the real king because he is the master. Everybody can do it. A householder can do it, but remember it is like training the wild horse. If you are not systematic with it, if you force it, if you compel it, it will teach you a nice lesson.

There is only one secret and that is mantra. If you go on repeating your mantra for one hour a day for one year, you will see the miracle of it. You can repeat the mantra, you can think of the mantra, you can whisper the mantra, you can even write the mantra. You can do what you like, but the system is this: first loud chanting, the second stage whispering, third stage is mental, fourth stage with your natural breath, fifth stage with a little deeper breath, sixth stage with deep breath. With whatever time is at your disposal, from one minute to two hours, first practise and perfect the mantra, and after two or three years, you find suddenly your mind becomes quiet.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In Greece we have an occult system of our own. Why would we choose yoga over the system which is rooted in our tradition?

I understand your point, but where has this occult system been for these so many thousand years? How many great saints has your country produced in recent years? Where is the tradition? How many people practise it? There is no use just voicing the fact that there is an occult system. The system is there, but the tradition is completely finished. Your culture could not resist Christianity. The whole Greek culture was converted, totally and completely.

You see, a culture must have power. India resisted Christianity and the onslaughts of Islam could not convert India, even with a sword. Here the whole of Greece was completely converted. The Greek man of three thousand years ago no longer exists. Where is Plato's Greece? Where is Socrates' Greece? You understand the point: any occult system must be really powerful. It must be clear.

Every occult system must be substantiated by science; it is not belief and not faith. If yoga is a good system it must be substantiated by science, not by me preaching yoga and you having faith in it, no. I must say, "This is to be proved by science." In the same manner, every culture, every system, must be backed by the statistics of science. Then naturally, if anyone has their own system, they must practise it.

Yoga is not occultism or a philosophy, it is a science. Science is that which can be proved. Yes, you practise pranayama – what happens to the brain? It can be written down. What happens to the blood pressure? That can be measured. What happens to the metabolism? That can be registered. If you practise meditation or the headstand pose, what happens to the brain? What happens to the lungs, glands and hormones? All that can be recorded and that is science. It is not enough to say, "My system is good, yoga is good." You must prove it like mathematics, like physics, like

chemistry, then acceptance is possible. The twentieth century man is sceptical; the primitive days were simple and far less complicated. So now a scientific approach answers man's probing questions.

Two of the most ancient traditions in the world are the Hindu and Greek cultures. Hindu mythology is older than the Greek system, and other systems came very much later. Whilst the Greek people had a philosophy, architecture, social system, art, science and medicine, religion, etc., the surrounding Europeans moved about, living naked like savages.

Both the Hindu and Greek cultures have their own gods and goddesses. The Greek culture was pantheistic, believing in many gods, while the Hindu culture was theistic, believing in many gods, but the source being one God. This is why, when Christianity came to Greece, they could not resist having a monotheistic belief in one God. Whereas when they saw that India had many gods, but at the same time the people worshipped one God, the Christians had nothing to say, they kept quiet. That was the philosophical resistance that we gave to Christianity and Islam.

I will give you one example where you will find absolute similarity. In the Greek culture the sun god is called Apollo, the Indians call it Surya. If you read the Hindu and Greek mythology you will find very great similarities. Not only that, in yoga the sun is a very important figure. There is one practice, surya namaskara, the twelve postures of the sun, dedicated to Lord Apollo or Surya, the sun god. If you study yoga thoroughly and then your own occultism, you will find both are the same, there is no difference.

We have read in books that yoga is one of the six occult systems of Brahmanism. You have said that yoga is not a religion, it is a philosophical movement.

Yoga is not one of the six systems of Brahmanism; this is wrong. I think you have read the wrong book by the wrong author with wrong intentions. Yoga is one of the six systems of

philosophy enquiring into the nature of the Supreme Being. What is philosophy? Knowledge of the truth. You see there are six systems of philosophy, not Brahmanism. The first is Charvaka, that is like Epicureanism in Greek philosophy. The second is Jain philosophy, that is the philosophy of hermits. The third is Buddhist philosophy. The fourth is the system of Indian logic. The fifth is Samkhya and the sixth is Vedanta. None of them are Brahmanic. Samkhya philosophy does not even believe in God, it is agnostic and out of Samkhya philosophy yoga philosophy is born.

Buddhism believes everything is maya, non-existence. For what purpose should we practise control of the mind and control of feelings?

In Buddhism there is no maya. There is a dialogue between a disciple of Buddha and a king of Greece called Menander. During the period of Menander he invited a very great disciple of Buddha to Greece and asked him two questions. The first question was how to exhaust karma, the second, what is consciousness? He was answered, "Consciousness is like this candle. Just as the candle is burning, in the same way the self is continuously effulgent, but this candle which is burning now is changing every second. The change is constant, and not only that, the change is sequential. Therefore the difference between the two moments is not seen and this appears as continuity." Therefore, Buddha said consciousness is momentary, subject to time and space. Time is a macrocosmic unit, but the minimum unit of time is less than a second. The disciple of Buddha told King Menander that the consciousness and the whole of creation are made out of moments. So there is no maya philosophy in Buddhism.

There is constant inequality, in war, crime and things like that. Why has God permitted all those things?

We have not yet learned to distinguish illusion from reality. Life is maya and so what if life is maya? What is the meaning

of maya? You see, first of all, maya is the same as relativity in physics. What you mean by relativity in science, in philosophy is maya.

You must read some scientific books on yoga that clarify meditation, asana, pranayama, mudra and bandha, otherwise the mind will be confused. Yoga is not occultism. Occultism is one branch of yoga. You see these people talk so much about religion and they confuse yoga with religion.

If life is not maya, if whatever we see, touch, breathe or feel is divinity, how do we try to approach, touch, experience in yoga?

It's very simple, I'll explain it the other way. If you are blind and you are asked to see the sunlight, you can never see it. If I explain it in the best language, even if I sing a song, even if I explain it one thousand and one ways, the blind man may understand, but he can't see. If he gets eyes you don't have to explain anything to him. He sees it. Yoga is a way to develop the eyes so that you may be able to realize your self, otherwise all that you are doing is intellectual.



6

Satsang

At the home of Theresa Plematias, 20 January 1978

There is a movement in India now that teaches that all the other teachers and gurus and their systems will be destroyed, and all the great yogis will have to reincarnate on earth. Is it true?

No, this will not happen in India. This can happen anywhere else in the world but the Indian way of thinking is entirely different from that of anybody else. I'll give you an example. Greece had a culture of its own, a religion of its own, but when it was invaded for century after century, everybody was converted. The old religion is no more. India was also invaded for centuries and centuries. There was a crusade in India, but they could not change us because in India we believe that the way is not one, there are many ways. There is not one guru, there are many gurus. We also believe in India that no system is perfect because every system is created by man. The only difference is that one man may be higher than another. So long as one has a human body, a human mind, one has human limitations. Even if God is born in this body, he has to die, because that is the law of the body.

Therefore, Indians have respect for all gurus, respect for all religions and, even if a religion comes with an atom bomb in hand, we will give it respect because we believe in *ahimsa*, non-violence. That is Hindu culture. We don't want cruelty,

we don't want war, we don't want to destroy anyone. Even a blade of grass has a role to play. Everything is useful.

How far can anybody go? Which spiritual level or field can someone reach by yoga?

Up to samadhi, up to self-realization, there are different names, but what is important is only one thing, to become aware of your true nature, that is final. The names are different. We call it samadhi, others call it mahasamadhi, others call it nirvana, others call it emancipation and others call it God-realization. It is all the same.

Swamiji, you mentioned the Indian attitude of non-violence, yet one remembers from the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna's complaint about fighting and killing the opposing army, including members of his own family and caste. The answer Lord Krishna gave was that a soldier had to do his duty and, if that duty involves killing, then it must be.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is symbolic; life is the battlefield, the two armies are the two forces of the mind, the dark force and the divine force, right? You get good ideas and bad ideas, they are two forces. Arjuna is you, me and all the individual souls, Krishna is the inner voice, the chariot is the body. Now, the individual soul sometimes does not want to face life, it wants to renounce the karma, the duty, the obligations, the responsibilities, because by renouncing them it will have less to fight in life. Then the inner voice tells the individual soul, "No! Fight you must." The individual soul says, "No sir, if I fight in life I will have blood pressure, tension, depression, disease, tragedy and pain. I'll have agony. I don't want to fight!" The Supreme Soul, your inner being, your inner self says, "No, you must fight. Then only will you evolve in spiritual life. If you do not fight through this life, then you will not evolve, your evolution will become static." Again, the individual soul, Arjuna, is asking, "Is it necessary to fight in life?" The inner spirit says, "Yes, evolution is a type of conflict and one has to go through the stages of

conflict in life. A man without conflict cannot grow, but the end of conflict is victory". And what is the fight? The fight is between the two forces. One force is dark, anarchical, unrighteous and only talks about enjoyments, sensualities, etc. What is the other force? The other force is behind me, what we call the righteous force, the divine force.

So, this is the symbolism of the *Bhagavad Gita* in which war does not mean a war like the First World War. In Greek mythology you also have wars between the gods. You have read of them I believe. Now, they should not be taken literally. You'll find in the story that there were demons coming, gods coming and they were fighting with each other. What does it mean? They should not be taken literally, they should be understood symbolically. What is happening in you is a war taking place. Sometimes this idea prevails and sometimes that one prevails supreme, so you are in a state of indecisiveness; not only you, I think, everybody. You see the point?

Now, you have to arrive somewhere. Either you are defeated or you are victorious. If you lay yourself flat before the idea, you are lost, you are defeated, but if you surrender to this idea, you are victorious. The idea that is progressive makes you victorious and the idea that makes you regress makes you defeated.

Now, another hypothesis. The *Bhagavad Gita* is a dialogue between a man with intuitive eyes and a blind man. I'm sure you know it. The *Bhagavad Gita* is a dialogue between a blind king and a man who has special eyes, like, you can say, television eyes, where you can see what is happening. The blind man is asking the question, "What is happening?" The man with intuition is telling him what is happening. Dhritarashtra is the blind king and Sanjay is his divine courtier, who is narrating to him what is transpiring between Krishna and Arjuna. Therefore, the dialogue always takes place between the guru and the disciple. The guru has the eyes of intuition, inner eyes, and the disciple has no eyes, he is blind spiritually. So, the dialogue takes place between a

man of knowledge and a man without knowledge. The man with knowledge is telling the man without knowledge how the individual soul is being guided by the spiritual soul in the conflicting arena of life. I mean, this is what we have been taught in India. You see the point.

Does the same apply to the Ramayana and other books?

Yes, in India the story of Rama is known as *Ramacharita-manas*. This is the Sanskrit name. It means the life of esoteric Rama or the esoteric narrative of Rama; it's not exoteric Rama. The soul is esoteric Rama; Rama goes into the jungle, being exiled. We are also in the wilderness; we are also in exile.

Can I ask something again? I don't understand the answer for what you should do when you are in a war and you have to kill somebody. You have orders from the colonel or from your country that you have to kill to protect your family or someone else and you don't know what to do. Will you kill or not?

That wasn't his question, but anyway I can answer your question differently on individual merit.

In theory we know if it is right or not, but what do you do in practice?

India has a history where it has proved, where it has exemplified very carefully and clearly that violence cannot be met by violence. We have fought with invaders for over ten centuries. We never succeeded by it, we only created bloodshed and disaster. We fought with the British people for only twenty-five years with non-violent methods and we succeeded. For only twenty-five years we fought a powerful people. The British are a very powerful people, very intelligent, very shrewd and very political, and we succeeded in twenty-five years. We fought with other invaders for over a thousand years with guns or soldiers and we never succeeded. For some time we may have

succeeded, for fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years, then again we would lose.

You see, the very concept of war is a mistaken concept of man. If not today, after two hundred years man will realize it. Wars, no matter how successful they are, leave behind a trail and trace of revenge. They leave behind them a sad remembrance which posterity cherishes: I'm not going to forgive you and you are not going to forgive me, which is how wars have continued from generation to generation. Not because war is necessary, but because your ancestors killed mine. "Now I'm in power I'll show you."

Ahimsa is the non-violent method which we are trying to bring home to the mind. If everything is done with love and with understanding, even your invader can understand it. If an invader attacks your country, he is not your enemy. He becomes your enemy when you retaliate. If you just give me one slap now, you are not my enemy, but if I then give you one slap, then you are my enemy. If you slap me and I say, "Mister, what wrong have I done that you give me a slap?" and you say, "You are a rascal!" and I say, "Maybe, but there should be some reason", I can bring home to your mind that what you have done is not just.

So, we have fought for ahimsa for many centuries and even today we believe that an atom bomb cannot be fought with an atom bomb, a sword cannot be met by a sword, violence cannot be met by violence. There has to be another method. I think mankind is coming to a point of understanding this. Maybe in another century we may be able to understand a better method of dealing with people who invade other countries, you see the point.

You did not answer my question. Shall I kill someone who is coming or not?

No.

Even in war?

No, we should not have war at all.

Well, this is the start. We are already under the circumstances. We have war. Individually, what shall I do?

We must try to find out ways of averting wars.

Under the present system?

Yes, it can be done. It can be done, it is being done. Mankind is trying today. Wars are taking place everywhere, but still we are trying to see that it is not inflamed. We discuss this very much in India. Not only now, it is a centuries-old discussion.

Do many people believe in reincarnation?

I have found most people in the world believe in reincarnation. Of course they believe in reincarnation in their own way, they have their own way of thinking, but certainly everyone believes.

Are you speaking about the common man or the people who follow yoga?

The common man.

Isn't it only theory? No one knows what happens after death.

I can give you some interesting information about it. I won't be able to give you the exact references at the moment, but in different countries deaths have taken place and soon after death, sometimes people come back to life. These cases have happened within the range of investigating scientists in different countries in different times and these experiences have been compiled by research scholars. Funnily enough, all the experiences are identical.

Now we were talking about reincarnation. The first thing about reincarnation that they have established is the survival of something after death. If something survives after death, then we should discuss reincarnation, otherwise there is no use. How can we prove that something survives after death? This particular research work proves that, after clinical death, an experience has taken place so there must be a

survival. If there was no survival how could an experience take place after death?

These people belonged to different religions and none of them were Hindus, none of them were Indian. The investigating scientists were Americans, Russians, Australians and French. The person died – that was proved. The minimum period for revival was five minutes, the maximum period was one hour and only in one case it was twenty-four hours. All these people were interrogated and they gave one identical experience. All these investigations took place within a period of thirty years; most of the people did not believe in reincarnation.

What was the experience? They first faced darkness, they entered into the darkness, they found agony and pain within themselves, they heard peculiar cries and screams and shouts. Then, after some time they found the darkness was diminishing, just like the dawn of the day, they found light growing little by little and they did not find any human being. They saw gardens of flowers that they never saw here. They heard some kind of music, not the music we have, then they returned again through the same darkness and here they are. Now, the experience is not important, the important thing is who experienced it. If the man was dead, if nothing survives, then why this experience? This experience shows that he survived by some soul, so this is the first proof of reincarnation.

The second proof: during the past fifty years parapsychologists all over the world collected cases of children who are able to narrate their previous life. Most of the children are about three years old and so there is no possibility of them being tutored by someone. Psychologists, parapsychologists and research scholars have conducted vast investigations into this, the point being how can these three-year old children remember their former lives, details of which can be found to be true? This is the second proof.

Therefore, I think for sure that reincarnation is the law of nature; reincarnation of a human species, reincarnation

in the vegetable kingdom, reincarnation in many, many kingdoms. I think continuity is the law of nature. In the realm of nature nothing is ultimately destructible, it is only metamorphosis or metempsychosis which takes place. The body is not ultimate. This body is a chariot. It's like a motor car. This body must have a passenger. The passenger is the self. Consciousness is the passenger, with the memories, with the experiences. After death it migrates and then, in order to fulfil its evolution, it goes into another life.

Yoga is fundamentally a science of having control over your mental functions just as you have control over a motor car. If you don't have control over your motor car it goes right and left, and goes haywire. If you don't have control over your mind you have mental and emotional breakdowns, and so many things. The classical definition of yoga therefore is to be able to hold complete mastery over all the dimensions of your mind.



7

Yoga and Hypertension

First National Greek Festival, Hotel Nepheli, Hesseloniki, 7 April 1981

It is now well known all over the world that yoga plays a very important role in tranquillizing hypertensives. Scientific research done in the US, Europe, Japan, India and other countries, has proved that the practices of yoga can help one to become free from hypertension. In fact, in India I coordinated medical research for three years, with the help of the Indian government, on the effect of yoga on diseases originating from hypertension. More than one thousand patients suffering from hypertension were referred to this coordinating body. The results were very optimistic.

First of all we have to understand what is meant by tension and hypertension. In one of the books on hypertension, the author has written an 'abbreviated dedication' to those who face diseases, epidemics, disasters and death, to those who live in poverty and face wars, to those who have lost their loved ones, and those who want someone to love them, to those who do not sleep at night. He goes on dedicating his book to every aspect of life, meaning nobody is free from tension.

External demands

Sometimes you have floods in the country, then you have earthquakes; you have inflation in the market, then you

have strikes; you have undesirable divorce in the family, then disobedient children, an unfaithful husband or wife, then your money is lost or your factory or shop is not successful, or you miss the plane or the bus – how many things can we count that cause tensions? Every time there is a demand on the human body and mind. Each and every thought is a reaction of the mind and contributes to this state of tension.

When we are young we can sustain this pressure; when we are ignorant and innocent we do not know about the pressure. When we are arrogant or egoistic we do not understand the pressure. When we are jubilant or active and dynamic we divert the pressures. When we live a life of sensual pleasure we do not know about these matters, but when we grow up and become a little more mature in intellect and mind, then we begin to feel these pressures, we become more sensitive, we feel more clearly the pressures of the subconscious mind.

As the body grows old, the arteries are not able to absorb the pressure; the heart is exhausted, it is not able to sustain the pressure. Therefore the tensions are clearly seen in our faces, in our bodies, in our systems. Tension is a constant activity of the human organism and our organism cannot sustain it, therefore it is known as hypertension. For example, a young man having about fifteen kilos on his shoulders feels it, but he is able to carry it. When this boy gets to be eighty years old, if you put the same weight on him he will not be able to carry it. Therefore, a particular pressure in youth is tension and the same pressure in old age is known as hypertension, and therefore in yoga the analysis of hypertension is very scientific.

Interlocking systems

It is said that when you control the prana, hypertension is eliminated. The activities of the brain, the body and the total organism are controlled by different brainwaves. These waves move in a definite pattern and they create what we call pressures in the body. When the brainwaves slow down and delta waves appear, you at once sleep. In one particular cycle

of waves your behaviour changes accordingly. Sometimes you become emotional, sometimes you are very sensitive, sometimes you are very indolent, sometimes tranquil; this is a consequence of the brainwaves. These particular brainwaves ultimately influence the glands, hormones and different systems in the body.

It has been seen that in different brain wave cycles the body secretes different groups of hormones which are absorbed in the bloodstream, and accordingly the diseases originating from hypertension are created. It has been found that when alpha waves dominate the brain, the blood pressure falls. When the blood pressure falls, the pressure from the coronary system is reduced. When the demand of the pressure on the heart is minimised, then what happens is the various glands in the body become tranquil. In turn, these glands, such as the thyroid and adrenal glands, influence man's mental and emotional patterns.

Releasing the locks

Through the practice of yoga or meditation, alpha waves can be made to predominate in the brain. This is one aspect of yoga. However, I told you earlier that man has been piling tensions over tensions on his system for many, many years. Right from your childhood you have been piling tensions on the brain. Every impression and every experience is stored in the mind in the form of an archetype.

There are certain impressions which are stored in the surface brain and there are other impressions that are stored in the deeper brain. It is the impressions that are stored in the deeper brain that give problems. When there are too many and they don't find an outlet, then what do they do? They come out like an explosion and when they come out as an explosion you become a mental patient. Therefore, in yoga it is said that we should give an innocent outlet for everybody to express these piled up impressions.

When you practise japa yoga, mantra and try to concentrate your mind, what happens is that many pictures,

many images, different scenes are witnessed by you. During the practice of concentration and meditation you have many experiences, you see many visions, what exactly are they? All you see during concentration and meditation are expressions and manifestations of your *samskaras*, the archetypes. Then you understand each and every experience is imperishable, everything you cognize is registered in you. You register these impressions through the eyes, the nose, taste and touch. These things are registered in your subconscious mind just as whatever I am saying is registered by the tape recorder. From the day you incarnated inside your mother's womb, up to this day, everything and every experience is registered by you in your subconscious mind.

Nothing is going unregistered, please remember that. Even in the night, when you are unconsciously sleeping, the process of registration is going on. Even when you are unconscious under morphine, ether or chloroform, the registration is going on because the subconscious mind is constantly active. The subconscious mind in yoga is known as the subtle body or the astral body. Even a child who doesn't understand anything has a completely natural astral body. Therefore, from the moment you incarnated in your mother's womb, right up to the point where you go to the grave, the constant process of registration of every experience is going on whether you know it or not.

These impressions sometimes become too much for an individual, especially for people who have a suppressed personality. Very suppressed personalities are known as introverted personalities and many people in the world today belong to this category, particularly in western countries. In eastern countries there are lots of chances for communication and expression, of vomiting out what is in the mind without any verbal etiquette, but our modern society, I will not say western society, our modern society is a suppressed society. We cannot even communicate with our family members openly and unassumingly, and therefore what happens is that everything is piled up within us.

The yogic keys

When you practise meditation, kriya yoga or some raja yoga practices, during meditation you have so many experiences. Sometimes you hear a sound in your ears, sometimes you see a lot of light, a lotus, a cross, your guru, Christ, a temple or a church. Sometimes you see a monster or dirty animals. Sometimes you see beautiful gardens, sometimes death and violence, sometimes you hear celestial music. Then you have the feeling of heat or cold or have shocks in the body. Then you think like Christ or God, you feel like repenting for all you have done in the past. This is called an outlet. This is called a manifestation of karma. This is called working out the archetypes and this is called expression.

Now, there is another important thing that you have to note. Whatever you experience in life has a symbol in the subconscious mind. If you experience pain, pleasure, comedy or tragedy, the same picture is not in the subconscious mind, it is immediately converted into a symbol, just as a sound in the transmitter centre is transformed into radio waves and then transmitted through the radio field, then again reconverted into the sound that comes in your transistor. So, throughout your life you have created millions of symbols in your subconscious mind, but nobody understands which symbol is for which particular karma.

There is another important thing – the karmas are endless. Every moment of your life you are going through experiences, even if you do not work, still you are creating karmas. Even if you live alone you are creating karmas because the whole of life is nothing but a manifestation of karma.

Simple living and high thinking

How to get out of these hypertension? We have found during our world tours that mostly people suffer from hypertension in the modern world. In the developing countries you have less cases of hypertension. In the developed countries you have a lot of hypertension. The

more the country is developed, the more cases you have of hypertension. Another aspect that has come to our notice is that the people who have less material problems have more hypertension, therefore hypertension is not necessarily due to material worries. When you don't have to think about money for living, when you don't have to worry about retirement or mental treatment, why should you have tensions? However, we have found that among these people there are many more people suffering from hypertension.

From this, one point is very clear. It is important that a person must have material problems to get rid of hypertension, because material problems keep a man within a certain space. We have studied the statistics of people suffering from coronary thrombosis. Why should the people who have succeeded in life, in business, in politics, have coronary thrombosis? Here, the emotions come into the picture. A man who succeeds has one type of emotion. The person who fails has a different type of emotion. These emotions immediately affect the glands, the hormones and the metabolism.

Successful people become very dull, they become great show-offs. They become very careless and contented. They think they can do anything with their success. They can fly to America this very afternoon and come back tomorrow morning, because they have a fat bank balance. This particular process of thinking immediately affects the critical organic process – they have diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary thrombosis. If you have difficulties sometimes you have cough and cold, sometimes fever, diarrhoea or dysentery, sometimes a headache or pain in the body, but not high blood pressure or hypertension, because the problems are being worked out then and there.

In the practice of yoga there is one particular aspect that is emphasized every time – simple living and high thinking. No matter who you are, you may be rich or poor, you may be a big factory owner or a labourer in the streets, you will have to simplify the whole process of living. Simple living is one of

the most important ingredients in yoga. Complicated living contributes to hypertension. Complicated living creates a lot of distress in the emotional personality, but in order to live a simple life you should have a very simple mind as well.



8

Revitalizing the Nervous System

Hotel Nepheli, Thessaloniki, 8 April 1981

If one has a weak, sensitive and exhausted nervous system due to heritage, how can one help it be revitalized?

There are two important practices that I can cite at this moment. In fact one of the most important practices through which you can overcome nervousness for the time being is japa yoga, which has been known to Indians for centuries. Japa yoga is the practice which is done with the mala, based on your mantra. If the nervousness is acute then you can have a mala in your hand all the time.

Mala means ‘garland’, through which you can practise mantra. If your mantra is *Om Namah Shivaya*, you repeat, “*Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya*”, as you turn the beads. If the nervousness is acute then have a smaller mala and you can go on practising all the time unconsciously. You can talk to your friends, read the newspaper, shave, do whatever you like, or if you take breakfast eat with the left hand while all the time you practise mantra. If you practise mantra as many times as you can, it will be wonderful for coming out of an acute nervous condition.

Besides japa there is the practice of pranayama. Nervousness is a breakdown in the system of energy in the body. I’ll give you an example: all these lights are burning on positive, negative and earth. There is an earth wire somewhere in

the building. Go there and cut it – what will happen? You may get a shock. In the same way, in our body different movements take place according to the energy.

I have been talking and you have been listening. You eat food and you digest it. You breathe through the twenty-four hours of the day. If you are a typist you are typing the whole day, if you are a housewife you are cooking and looking after the family or driving your motor car; all these actions demand energy. First of all you must realize this truth – the body is not only a physical machine, it is electrical as well. When you think, this also needs energy; anger, passion, worry, anxiety, love, hatred, all these things demand energy.

In this body there are millions of pathways which conduct this energy to remote corners of the body, and they are known as *nadis* or the nervous system. Broadly they are classified as sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Not only the major organs of the body, but also the processes of thinking and feeling are controlled by this nervous system. These nervous systems are known as yin and yang, and in yoga as *ida* and *pingala*.

When we overuse the energy in our life, nervous breakdown takes place. For example if you bring a very big heater and plug it into any normal house plug, it will fuse immediately. If you put in a stronger fuse, the wire will burn. It's the same system in the body. Your body has its own set capacity and limitation. Your nerves have their limit and yet many times you are putting demands on your nervous system. A little emotion is okay, a little passion is all right, a little bit of anger is better, but too much is no good. When you are unnecessarily emotional with too much anger, vengeance and animosity, and too worried about little or big matters, then that withdraws the energy from the nervous system.

Remember that the nerves do not produce energy. This electrical cable does not produce energy, it is only the conductor of energy. Within the body there is a point where energy is produced. Energy is produced in different chakras and if there is a breakdown in the chakra your nervous

system cannot carry the energy, the electricity, through the body. Even if the wiring is all right in your building, if there is a breakdown in the generating station, will you get energy there? So when you talk about nervous breakdown you must be clear on two points. Sometimes I laugh when people come to me because they don't understand the difference between nervous depression and nervous breakdown. They are not suffering from nervous breakdown, but energy breakdown. There is no breakdown in the wiring; energy doesn't come because there is a breakdown in the generating system somewhere. So people who are suffering from a nervous breakdown should remember that they will get nothing from taking a nerve tonic.

Do you know the name of the energy in the body? Inside we call it *prana*, outside you call it electricity. Electricity is generated in the powerhouse. You know how? Hydraulic, nuclear, solar and so many other methods exist. How do you generate energy within the body? The *pranas* are in the atmosphere in the form of negative and positive ions. These negative ions are plentiful in the mountains, by the side of a clean river, in forests and gardens, but there are very few in a city room or in the streets. In mountain air they found 5,000 units per 300 cubic feet as against 50 in a room.

When you breathe in, the air enters through the nostrils and immediately messages are sent about the quantity of ions which the air contains, and it affects the brain and nervous system. If the air is polluted the pollution is immediately thrown out in the form of cough or cold because nature wants to stop pollution lodging in the body as much as possible. Sometimes, when you begin the yogic practices of *neti* and *pranayama*, you do get cough and cold in the beginning as the cleansing mechanisms are stimulated. Then the receptivity of the body to the ions gradually increases in a balanced manner. This adjustment in energy and balance is basic in yogic therapy for nervous breakdown or nervous depression.

These and other practices of yoga re-adjust and balance the body back to its natural way of functioning. So, even if

we are not able to live by the pure river in the mountains,
still we begin to move our body and energy back into their
simple, natural rhythms.



9

Integral Yoga

Hotel Kapsis, Thessaloniki, 30 September 1982

You know what I am going to talk about. Not because we are preaching yoga, but because mankind throughout the world needs it. The need for yoga has arisen from the very facts which surround man's life today. We have never been apostles of yoga. We live our life in the solitary mountains in order to perfect our own mind and body, that is all. We never thought that in our life we would be preaching yoga to the rest of the world. In India we live very far from modern civilization, we have no ulterior motives in our life. The purpose for which we dedicated our lives many, many years ago was to realize the fountain of perfection within us.

The modern world did not leave us in peace however. Doctors, scientists, scholars, philosophers, kept on chasing us. Thousands and thousands of young boys and girls come to our country in search of peace and recovery of their identity. You cannot imagine how many millions of boys and girls, men and women from our modern society have come to my place, sleeping on the bare floor. The questions they asked were, "How can we obtain peace of mind? How can we realize our true nature?" We said to them questioningly, "You have plenty in your country, you have affluence and security, you have everything that the body needs."

The need for yoga

This is the theme for tonight. Thousands of years ago India developed a science of life. This science of life was intended for a monk like me and a layman like you. Whether you are a great man or an ordinary man you face similar problems in life. The problems in the life of a theist and an atheist are not different, we all have the same mind, the same body and the same type of limitations. So, thousands of years ago India discovered the science of life known as yoga.

Yoga means harmony, though everybody is in disharmony. Ask the doctors of psychology, ask the great men who know about the mind, they will say that one hundred percent of the human population is suffering from disharmony. That means everybody is in disharmony; one hundred out of one hundred have conflicts. There are only a few people on the face of this earth who don't have conflicts. There is hardly any personality beyond confusion, there is hardly anyone who is not a victim of tension and this is the unbalanced personality of the human race.

Inner experience

Yoga is not a philosophy, it is a practical science. Philosophy gives you knowledge, yoga gives you experience. Everyone of you knows what happiness is, but you have no experience. Everybody knows what peace of mind is, but they have no experience. The beauty of yoga is that it gives you experience. That experience is a manifestation of your inner being. So, the process of yoga depends upon your own personality.

The main hypothesis of yoga is that what you are seeking in your life is in you and not outside. You need peace of mind? Search it out from within yourself. You want to be happy? Realize it within yourself. Happiness and unhappiness, both are expressions of your mind. When your mind is unrestrained you are unhappy, when your mind has a lot of turbulence you are unhappy, but when you control and concentrate your mind, you can experience happiness.

Yoga recognizes four facets of your personality. You have a body, emotions, intellect and you have a deeper mind. All these four constitute you and me. If you can develop all these four parts of your personality through yoga, then you can develop them in an integrated way. Therefore the practices of yoga are constituted in a manner which can be helpful for these four facets of your personality.

Just as you need different vitamins for the normal development of the various organs of your body, in the same way you need a synthesis of all the forms of yoga.

Integral yoga

It will not be possible for me to deal with all forms of yoga tonight, but I will mention them and then talk about one or two systems. The integral yoga system consists of four forms of yoga. They are known as karma yoga, the yoga of dynamism; bhakti yoga, the yoga of balanced emotions; raja yoga, the yoga of the deeper mind; and jnana yoga, the yoga of the intellect. These are the main faculties of yoga. Then there are the smaller ones and it is not possible for me to tell you all of that. I will just say a few things about hatha yoga and meditation.

It has been realized by the yogis that the physical body is very important for mental development. There are two forces which constitute the body, known as life and consciousness. When there is a balance between life force and the force of consciousness there is perfect health, but when there is an imbalance between them then you have physical diseases or mental diseases.

One of the most important forces in your body is called *prana*, the life force. This prana is not just oxygen or air which you breathe in, although it is present in your body in the form of oxygen. It's something like the energy flowing through electricity cables. Scientific investigations have measured the voltage of the energy in the body and it has been found that through the practice of pranayama you can increase the energy in the body.

The healing aspect

Because of a faulty lifestyle, on account of mistakes in thinking, many times this force of prana loses its highest frequency. This vital force, this life force penetrates the whole body, but if there is a block in its flow, then physical disease originates. Through the practice of yoga postures and through breathing techniques, you can increase the frequency of life force in the body. This is the reason why today, throughout the world, yoga postures and breathing techniques are used for curing many chronic and previously incurable diseases. The investigators are coming to the conclusion that most of the psychosomatic diseases can be effectively controlled by yoga postures and pranayama.

Hundreds of scientists are now working on this project. In America, Europe, India, Japan and Australia they are trying to study the effects of yoga postures on the human body and the effects of pranayama on the human mind. Throughout the world, yoga centres are now teaching yoga for what we call complete health. These yoga postures are known as asanas. In the West it is known as hatha yoga. Before the scientific investigations, people thought they were just exercises and therefore thought it mattered little if you did yoga, you did jogging or other physical exercises; it was all the same. Now scientists say something else: that in all other practices you use maximum energy, maximum oxygen, you exert maximum pressure on your cardiovascular system, but in yoga you use minimum energy, minimum oxygen and there is less strain and stress on the coronary system.

They have also come to another conclusion, that this yoga system creates a balance in the endocrine system. By clearing up certain endocrine secretions, asanas create an influence on the nature of disease. Therefore, disease born of hormonal deficiency can be perfectly checked through the practice of yoga postures. There are certain yogic postures which exert influence on the adrenal glands. As a result of this, adrenalin is produced to cope with the diseases that are respiratory in nature, like asthma. There are certain yoga

postures which improve the thyroid secretions, as a result of this you are able to hold emotional balance during fear and anger. There are certain postures which improve the activity of the pancreas and so you can fight diabetes.

This is just a glimpse I am providing you with. I have found a system of my own for yoga therapy which is acceptable today throughout the world. I have been writing volumes and volumes of books on the scientific investigations of yoga. Therefore, all of you who are present here this evening should not feel that I am just giving tall talk.

Meditation

Another force in the body is the mind. You can call it consciousness, mind or whatever you like. This mind is a great force, no doubt. It controls your body, it destroys your body, it kills a man, it spoils the family and it influences society. This mind is very powerful – it can make you great and it can make you wretched, and the most important thing in the life of man is that he does not know the mind.

What you know about the mind is not the mind. You know you are worried, you know you are angry, you know that you are remembering and you know that you are nervous. This is not the mind, this is a pattern of the mind. The light is not the electricity, it is a manifestation of the electricity. Anger, passion and thought are not the mind. A little of the mind you know and the rest you do not. The mind is like an iceberg and how much of that is seen by man? You have to know the mind if you want to improve the quality of your personality, of your thinking, of your behaviour and of your society. The most beautiful thing about yoga is that it gives you a glimpse of the total mind, but of course gradually.

What is meditation? Just think about it, what is meditation? To close the eyes, to close the mind, to stop thinking? No, that is not meditation. Meditation is opening the doors to the mind. Meditation is diving deep into past, present and future. Just as you go into an ancient treasure house and you see so many jewels there, in the same manner,

when you go into the mind you can find infinite faculties and infinite beauties.

This science of meditation has been perfected by the yoga system. As you go on successfully meditating, changes take place in the body also. I can give you a glimpse or an idea about that. When you sit in the lotus posture with your spine upright and straight and with your eyes closed, what happens? They have found brainwaves altering, oxygen consumption changing, the respiratory system behaving differently, the metabolic rate and the metabolic process undergoing great change and the muscles of the heart improving. They have also found changes in the rate of regeneration in cells of the body.

Mantra

This meditation can be practised by each and everybody, but of course in order to practise meditation you must have some sort of basis. Most important for successful meditation is sound. When you want to meditate, please remember that you will succeed only if you have a symbol for meditation. There are three symbols for meditation: one symbol is known as sound, the second symbol is known as a diagram and the third symbol is known as a mandala-these three form the basis for your meditation. It is not necessary that you should have all three symbols. I can tell you which is the best and the easiest for everyone. The best is the sound symbol.

This sound can be given a higher frequency, so much so that this sound can be transformed into explosive energy. You know there are various forms of energy in the universe: you know about electrical energy, you know about nuclear energy. I am talking about sound energy. This sound can be made very powerful. When it is repeated and repeated and repeated it attains high frequency. Therefore, everybody who wants to achieve success in meditation must discover a sound for themselves. This sound is known in yoga as a mantra.

Please do not misunderstand me. I do not mean a holy name. I am not dealing with a religious matter. I am just

dealing with what we call the phenomenon of sound. I know that even in modern science sound can be made to pierce matter. Sound knows no barriers. Sound waves travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres across continents, they can be transformed into electrical waves and again transformed into sound waves.

So, one must discover a mantra for oneself. The discovery of sound depends upon one's quality of elements and you can realize the quality of your elements by your astrological sign. According to the astrological sign, one has a sound for oneself. Of course I know that my limitations at this moment are such that I cannot talk about this subject to a great extent.

The sound must be practised every morning and at night when you will listen with rapt attention for just ten minutes. You should practise your mantra either audibly or mentally. Start with ten minutes in one stretch. When you begin do it once a day and when you like it, later, practise twice a day. Whether your mind is calm or not, you should keep your body calm and quiet. The mind cannot become quiet in one day or even in one year. It is not even good to compel the mind to become quiet, in fact in the beginning of your meditation you mind will purge more thoughts. If thoughts come into your mind you should not worry at all. You should be constant with the practice of the mantra, but at the same time you should not try to concentrate because sometimes when you try to concentrate you are creating unnecessary stress and strain.

Yantra and mandala

In order for you to concentrate it is necessary for you to choose another symbol for yourself. Mantra is not intended for concentration. Mantra is intended to facilitate a passage for concentration. Mantra purifies your consciousness, but for concentration you must have another kind of symbol. Either it should be a diagram or it should be a mandala. Diagrams are known in yoga as yantras. If you do not know

anything about yantras, please find out. It is a very powerful system for concentration and, in my opinion, yantra reaches the depths of consciousness without any difficulty and can permeate your consciousness and dreams, both. Now, remember what I said, mantra is not for concentration. If you try to concentrate during mantra you will have to face repressions. Let it take one or two or three years, but the mantra must purge more and more of your mental impurities. By constant practise of mantra the mind becomes tranquil and equipoised, then you should practise concentration on yantra.

There are many thousands of yantras and you can choose any one of them. The science of mantra and the science of yantra are very old. Every culture of the world the Aryans, Babylonians, Egyptians and the pre-Hellenic cultures knew all about it, and the Kabbalists among the Jews knew about it very well. They knew the power of the mind and they knew that the mind can make life hell or make life heaven. It is precisely for this reason that people all over the world are wanting to practise yoga.

Tonight it is definitely not possible to teach you all about yoga, but it is my humble submission to all of you here that for yourself, for your coming generation, for posterity, you must yourself discover the science of yoga. It will not interfere with your modern way of life, with your system of thinking or with your religion. It will not interfere with your culture because yoga has two important qualities: it is a curative science and it is a creative science. A curative science because it cures the ailments of your body and a creative science because it improves the quality of your thinking.

10

Press Interview

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 30 September 1982

Yoga has become so popular that there are training centres throughout the world in the thousands. In the last few years, apart from hatha yoga, another aspect of yoga has received prominence and that is the yoga of meditation. Formerly we thought yoga meant shutting down the mind, but now psychologists, psychotherapists and thinking people say that meditation is not shutting the mind, but it is opening the mind. The latest researchers in science have shown that, during the practice of meditation, the body becomes totally balanced. Various forms of yoga have received the attention of humanity. In Russia the parapsychological aspect of yoga is receiving attention, in Japan the physical aspect, in America the science of meditation and in Australia practically all the aspects of yoga.

Lately there has been a greater interest in yoga. Has this happened because it is a special time for yoga or because it is being presented in a better way?

I think yoga has been presented in a better way by a better quality of people, and it's also because today the situation all over the world is full of stress, strain and tension. In a society which is affluent and full of excitement yoga is necessary in order to balance the life principle.

In Greece another centre is opening and so there is activity in Greece. How does this compare with other European countries?

The picture of yoga is very bright in Western European countries, well-organized, well-disciplined and well-defined. Yoga teaching is a career there, recognised by the Department of Education and Social Welfare. In Eastern European countries the scientific research on yoga is done on a very scientific scale.

In Greece people are greatly enthusiastic about yoga. I have addressed dozens of crowded meetings here in the last few years. Last year, in Thessaloniki, I remember there were thousands of people in one place and the hall was jam-packed. I find the people of this country can understand the spirit of yoga very well in relation to life. What is wanted is facilities to teach them and opportunities to expose them to yoga. Our centre which was started in Athens is very popular and is doing good work.

Could we hear more about the breathing techniques which affect the nervous system?

In yoga, breathing techniques are known as pranayama. They are the breathing techniques which have to be practised every morning for ten or fifteen minutes, and the practices should be done on an empty stomach after clearing the bowels. Breathing practices are threefold: inhalation, retention and exhalation.

The breathing has to be done with alternate nostrils. For example, you should first breathe through the left nostril, then retain the breath for a while, then exhale through the right nostril. Again inhale through the right nostril, retain the breath for a while and exhale through the left. This is one type of breathing exercise. Breathing has to be done as slowly and as mildly as possible. When you practise, the important thing is that you have to maintain the spine upright and straight, and for that period of time the body should remain immobile and the eyes closed.

It has a few stages. In the final stage you have to maintain a ratio between inhalation and exhalation, that is the period of exhalation should be twice the period of inhalation. This practice particularly improves the cardiovascular activities. It has been found that there are certain pranayama practices which improve the health of the coronary muscles, and this practice is important in that it maintains a balance between the input and output of the heart. If the heart is not able to clear out the blood at the same rate as it rushes in, then you feel heaviness and pain there.

Due to faulty living, sometimes the valves of the heart become narrow and constricted. When you practise pranayama this improves the two pathways of the heart: the auricle and the ventricle. Also, there are pranayamas which improve the quality of the circulation. Many times your body is lazy and the circulation is very sluggish so you do not feel well mentally or physically, then you need the pranayamas which affect the circulation. Like this, you have many breathing techniques intended for many purposes.

What is the psychological aspect of yoga?

The mind can do more than thinking. When you increase the frequency of the mental waves it can function efficiently. When your mind is turbulent it misses many judgements. When you can restrain your thoughts then the mind can emit high frequency waves. I can give you a simple example. Two people can sit together in one room, practise restraint on the thinking process, create void in the mind. As you are able to create the void, thoughtlessness, the brainwaves, the mental waves, attain very high frequencies. After that, if you think something, the next man is going to think exactly that. This is called thought transference.

So, in yoga there is a branch which believes that the mind is more capable than you know. A lot of work has already been done on this all over the world, including in Soviet Russia. I think it is not very hard for the Greek people to believe this because much of it is already present in your

culture. What you need is the right type of practices taught by your teacher.

In this particular context I will cite one experiment. This is an authentic experiment where, seven years ago, two people practised thought transference under controlled conditions. First they practised at a distance of one meter. When they succeeded they increased the distance until, finally, the distance was 1,600 miles and both the subjects were in Faraday's cages where electromagnetic and radio waves cannot penetrate, but thought waves could. This is a very important experiment, documented and conducted under controlled conditions. It also means that, by restraining the thought process and concentrating the mind, you can achieve great results with the mind.



11

Press Interview

Hotel Electra Palace, Thessaloniki, 1 October 1982

In the latter part of the century a lot of changes have taken place and are taking place practically everywhere in the world. Technology has reached a point where it is creating a lot of problems in man's personal life. Apart from pollution and mental strain, it has drained the philosophy of man completely. People have started wondering about an alternate way of life and thinking, and this is going to be the way of life in the century that is coming. Many thinkers have been paying attention to this issue. Of course there are many ways that we know, that we can live with. Most of these thoughts and philosophies have emanated from the East, but people have found them to have very little practical value.

Westerners travelling in India discovered a wonderful way of living and thinking, but it is only in the last four decades that yoga has caught the attention of serious minded people of the West. Great psychologists like Paul Roe and others made thorough studies in yoga. Philosophers, psychologists and social thinkers were immensely impressed by yoga, but recently another wave has taken the world by surprise. One comes from Soviet Russia and the other from the technological West. The investigations in Russia proved that yoga has much to offer in relation to evolution of the human

mind. Scientific investigations in the West have revealed that yoga can be used for the treatment of many so-called incurable diseases.

This discovery has taken everybody by surprise. Now, thousands of yoga clinics throughout the world have been opened. It is not a matter of belief or faith because yoga is a science which is totally analytical. You don't have to believe, but you can investigate. At the same time, it is necessary for us to educate the public about yoga, especially in countries like Greece where religion is very predominant. Therefore, we have been going to different countries and talking to people about yoga.

You can talk to anyone, anywhere about yoga and they will never say it is bad. Particularly in the West, the world has been educated to understand yoga as a benevolent science. To that end they have introduced it in many walks of life. In some countries they are teaching yoga to inmates of mental hospitals and they teach yoga to mentally retarded children in order to improve their brain. In some countries they are teaching yoga to rehabilitate people from drug addiction. Some countries have started teaching yoga to school children for better discipline. So it is necessary that this country also knows what is happening in the world concerning yoga and that there are many types of sicknesses which can be inexpensively treated through yoga.

It is not my assertion; it is the conclusion of scientific investigations in modern countries. Medical science is asking seriously whether yoga is only preventative, or if it is a promotive or a curative science and doctors are working to answer this. In many countries the church or religious institutions have also adopted yoga in their monastic and traditional systems. Buddhist monasteries in Japan, Roman Catholics in South America and Muslims in Middle Eastern countries have a very keen interest in yoga precisely because yoga is a science and not a religion. Therefore, it is the right time to think about emulating the patterns of yoga in their life also.

Can you define yoga in a few words?

The definition of yoga is to discipline the body, mind, emotions and intellect. We should understand that discipline also means proper training.

There seems to be a phenomenon that many people think that yoga is some kind of a religion and not, as you mentioned, a science.

Surely yoga is not a religion because the most important thing in religion is God; if there is no God, there is no religion. The traditional philosophy of yoga is atheistic. Religion talks of God, paradise, sin, punishment, salvation, doomsday; they more or less define religion. Yoga does not understand paradise, it talks about a better mental state; it doesn't talk about God at all – it talks about the possibility of being a master of yourself. According to yogic philosophy, man can direct his destiny according to his mental capacity.

The purpose of yoga is to make you capable of living a better life here. There are many factors that I could discuss which go to prove that all that there is in religion is not in yoga at all. The yogic texts do not talk about God. I mean, they don't deny God; they don't even discuss God.

Yoga is something like a science, like chemistry, botany, biology. I do believe in God, but that's a different matter. If you teach yoga you may believe in God, but God has nothing to do with your teaching. A professor of nuclear physics may believe in God, but that has nothing to do with nuclear physics. A professor of psychology may believe in God or may go to a church or temple, that's okay, but that has nothing to do with what he's teaching. Because I am a man representing a religion does not mean that what I am teaching is a religion. To say that another way, a theist may teach the Bible, but he needn't become Roman Catholic.

So, this should be very clear to you about religion and science. The most important thing is this – religion is based on belief, yoga is based on analysis. If you ask a person who believes in religion to prove his faith he will say, "No, it is

written in the book”, but if you ask a yogi to prove that it is true he says, “You go and check it. If it is wrong reject it.” That’s the basic difference.

It was mentioned before that man can arrange and control his destiny through yoga, but this seems to be contrary to what religion believes.

No, many religions believe in a personal way. According to the basic tenets, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, they are the four God fearing religions. Man is not a total puppet. He can change much of his destiny by the gift of willpower that God provided him with. They say that God has created man in his own image. They also say that the relationship between man and God is according to man’s achievements, that at the highest level of mental development ‘I and my Father are one’. At a humble point in a very weak man, at a lower point of the mind, ‘I am here, my Father is in heaven’. There is no real contradiction as far as man’s conquest of destiny is concerned.



12

Satsang

Hotel Nepheli, Thessaloniki, 1 October 1982

Can one become a swami without becoming sensitive?

What does the word 'swami mean? The word *swami* means 'master of his own self'. How to become a swami? It is a good question, but a difficult question.

In Western countries we people are misunderstood because we are equated with priests. Priests belong to a religion, they are loyal to one religion. We are not priests because we do not teach religion. For us every religion is fit for reverence. We work for every religion. Then there are people known as monks. Monk means 'mono', we are neither priests nor monks. We do not belong to a religious order, nor do we belong to a sect.

In order to become a swami you must train your mind. You must be able to understand your mind and live with a guru for some time. If you cannot live with a guru you cannot become a swami. Not only a swami, but everybody must be patient with life. In your everyday life you are facing onslaughts on your mind and your mind gets hurt, wounded every now and again. Even a little thing disturbs you very much. Do you not know that pain and pleasure follow man like a shadow? Do you not know that disease and death are the inevitable destinies of everybody? Do you not know that everybody who has come down will be criticized? They are

such natural laws that man has to accept them. Then why do we shout wail and scream? Why can't we balance our mind in both situations? When pleasures come you say, "Welcome." When pain come to you, you say, "Get out." Why all this? Can you eradicate death? Therefore, a wise man behaves in a balanced way in this drama of life. If you want to win this battle of life you must know how to be balanced and, in my opinion, everybody has to learn how to be balanced in life. When you are able to balance your mind in the natural situations of life, then you can get to higher spiritual life.

Our training is defective and therefore our children don't know how to face life when they grow up. Perhaps you know the rate of suicide in Scandinavian countries? They have so much prosperity, so much money, why should they commit suicide? Because of how they are feeling about a little, very insignificant thing. Very insignificant affairs of life disturb their mind and they commit suicide. Husband and wife fight with each other; it's very natural that a husband and wife must fight. The husband takes a revolver and shoots himself because he cannot understand the natural law which takes place between husband and wife. Well, not only this kind of suicide, but people become very unhappy; they take to drugs, they become alcoholics and they become depressed. Is this the way we understand the laws of nature related to our life?

Therefore, a swami has to be one who is a master of his own mind and situations. You should not misunderstand and think that a swami is just a religious priest. Priests are wise people. They have a lot of knowledge, but they are human beings. They can't sustain the kicks of life. They can't maintain balance during adverse situations, but if they can they are not priests, they are swamis.

You are a householder, you have a family, but if you are wise and are able to handle the situations of life and have mastered your own mind, you are a swami. Therefore, all of us must aspire to be swamis and for this you must have a guru who must inspire you from time to time. Besides one's own religion, one needs inner inspiration.

How do we cope with insomnia?

Insomnia is a symptom which is also responsible for many ailments in the physical body. When one is suffering from insomnia one should understand that one has something wrong in one's body, and later this will develop into something else. The digestive system is very much upset by insomnia. Then there are diseases due to malnutrition and those people who are not able to sleep properly often have a very bad liver. In the course of time, insomnia disturbs the normal function of the system and when the nervous system is disturbed you are not able to cope with your day-to-day work. You get tired and exhausted.

In our modern system when one is suffering from insomnia one is usually given sleeping pills. The sleeping pills give relief no doubt, but they do not eradicate the cause of the problem. Quite often the malfunctioning of hormones in the body is responsible for insomnia. For example, if there is malfunctioning of the adrenal gland then you suffer from anxiety neurosis. Many times you will have noticed that when you are worried about some topic of your life, then you have the symptoms of insomnia. Therefore it is very necessary for people to know how to sleep well naturally. In this respect yoga plays a vital role.

There are many practices of yoga which lead to good sleep. In the brain there are frequencies known as brainwaves. At different times these waves keep on changing. You have delta waves, theta waves, alpha and beta waves and these waves indicate the electrical frequencies operating inside the brain. It is necessary to bring down the high frequency of the brain, especially at night. When the frequencies in the brain become minimal then there is minimal activity in the body and the consumption of oxygen also falls to a minimum. When you sleep well you conserve more energy for the next day. When you can't sleep in the night you are using oxygen, therefore the oxygen will be depleted when you are supposed to work. If you read the scientific manuals on yoga you will come to realize

one important point about it and that is, in yoga you use minimum oxygen.

In yoga sleep is considered to be very important because according to yogic philosophy, sleep is not a passive state. During deep sleep the individual becomes very dynamic on the unconscious plane and during deep sleep he is very close to his inner being. That is the exact reason why sleep gives you so much energy, so much freshness and so much bliss. In deep sleep there is only a veil between you and your inner being, therefore you must know how to sleep well. It is precisely for this reason that yoga has designed certain disciplines.

The first discipline in yoga regarding insomnia is that you should not sleep with a loaded stomach. When you go to sleep, when you go to bed, your stomach must be empty. If there is food in the stomach at night then there is the possibility of hyperacidity and fermentation. As a result of the presence of food in the stomach you have funny schizophrenic dreams in the night which disturb the sleep. Therefore, the minimum time difference suggested in yoga between your dinner and going to bed is three hours. This difference of three hours is for vegetarians. For non-vegetarians it should be more than three, it should be five hours.

The second discipline is when you go to bed, you must lie down on your left. Some people prefer to sleep flat on back, others prefer to sleep on the right and many people sleep on the stomach. These three positions are not regarded as scientific. Except in exceptional cases you should try to avoid these three. Those who are suffering from slipped disc or sciatica, they should sleep on the stomach, but for the average person it should be on the left side because that works the heart to the minimum.

The third discipline is, before going to bed, you must sit down for ten to twenty minutes. Even if you are tired, you must sit down before sleeping. It is not only for those who are suffering from insomnia, it is meant for all of us, even for me, because when you go to bed the subconscious

mind comes into the forefront. You begin to worry at that time. You begin to remember all that is not necessary. You make castles in the air. You get into impossible fantasies. So much so that you cannot sleep and you go on changing your position: right, left and both, then get up for a while, smoke a little and take a little tea or coffee. Then it is two o'clock in the morning. This happens with most people. Nobody wants it, but still they have it because they do not know that sleep is a mental condition affecting the body.

Sleep is not a physiological condition affecting the mind. Sleep is a mental condition, and the concentration should be in the form of a mantra. You must repeat your mantra and if you do not have a mantra chant "*Om, Om*" because *Om* is the universal sound. Or you can just chant "Jesus, Jesus". Or you can go on chanting "guru, guru". Whatever it is you must have a name which will create tranquillity, peace and unity in the mind before you are about to sleep. It is also good to have a small mala of twenty-seven beads without a stop in between. Usually the malas have a stop in between. We call it a *sumeru*, 'the top', but the mala that you use at night before going to bed should not have that interruption.

Now, there is a fourth important discipline, the practice known as yoga nidra. It is one of the most powerful methods ever known to mankind. Before I go on to tell you about yoga nidra I'll tell you something else. In 1968 I approached the Indian government for a research grant. They granted me money for research for a period of five years. During this period we taught yoga nidra to more than 1,000 patients suffering from coronary diseases. You will be surprised to know that the results were fantastic and even beyond my expectations. I have a good friend in India. He is an eminent cardiologist and he teaches yoga to his patients who are suffering from hypertension. He has found, during the course of his profession, that yoga nidra has been able to help these people very much.

The practice of yoga nidra can be done first with the help of a teacher. Now what is the practice of yoga nidra?

In the physical body you have many parts like the thumb and fingers, the lips and the nose, the hip and waist, your big and small toes. Like this you have seventy-six centres in the external body. These centres have a counterpart in the gyrus of the brain and when you think about one, followed by the second or third part of the body, a certain sensation is created. This sensation is in the form of a feeling and is carried to the remotest centre in the brain gyrus. As soon as this sensation is communicated to the brain gyrus, relaxation takes place immediately. It is not necessary to even concentrate on the organs, it is enough if you just feel them.

This practice was discovered by me while studying tantra. In those days I used to practise tantric rituals and in these tantric rituals that I was performing there were many things that I could not understand. In one of the rituals you go on touching the thumb, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, fifth finger, palm, right eye, left eye, nose, but I did not know why I was to practise like this. Whenever I practised feeling different parts of the body according to the tantric ceremony, I used to feel a sort of drowsiness as if I had taken a sleeping pill.

Then I studied biology, anatomy and the medical sciences and I realized that it was very necessary for me to tell people that by thinking of the different organs in the body you can create tranquillity and sleep in your body. Now I will explain a very simple experiment that you can do by yourself. You lie down in the pose of relaxation and keep on thinking of your ten fingers, ten toes and other organs of the body one by one. You will never know when you finished them. This is the practice of yoga nidra.

Before you practise yoga nidra there is another important practice which I want to suggest for people who are suffering from insomnia. Before you go to bed at night, light a candle so that the flame of the candle is not much higher than the level of your eyes and the flame of the candle should not flicker. You gaze at the flame of the candle without blinking the eyes for as long as possible, then close the eyes. After

closing your eyes concentrate on the mid-eyebrow centre and try to visualize the counter effect of the light on the retina. Do it a few times, then practise your your mantra. Then lie down flat on your back and practise a little bit of yoga nidra and you'll have a sound sleep.

I have written a book on yoga nidra. It has been translated into nearly all the important languages of the world, including Greek, and you can know more about yoga nidra from that book. It is not only for good sleep that you must know yoga nidra. You must learn yoga nidra in order to learn more when you are sleeping. You must learn yoga nidra in order to change your bad habits, if you have any, and you must practise yoga nidra in order to improve your willpower.

I hope my reply to your question will help you.

Please tell us more about mandala.

The topic is very good, but it needs a little introduction because, for many people, mandala means nothing. In the tantric tradition there are three basic elements for expanding the mind. What is expanding the mind? When you are able to know beyond this objective world. That is called expanding the mind. So, there is a fact that you can improve your mind. For this you need three basic points. You can expand your mind by mantra, yantra and mandala. *Mantra* is sound, *yantra* is diagram and a *mandala* is form. It can be a human form, an animal form or an object which has three dimensions.

An idol is a mandala; any form which you draw is a mandala; a picture or a photograph is a mandala; a tree or a mountain is a mandala. There are two-dimensional mandalas and there are three-dimensional mandalas. A photo or picture is a two dimensional mandala and there are three-dimensional mandalas, and the three-dimensional mandalas have a very deep effect on the human mind.

Mandala can be translated as a pictorial conception or object conception. Dr Sigmund Freud translated it as 'pictorial conception', but later other psychologists like Carl Jung, Adler and Paul Roe called it 'object conception'. Why do we use

these mandala, yantra and mantra? It is not possible for me to celebrate on the whole thing, but as an illustration I can tell you that I have a very talented disciple in Switzerland. He is a school teacher and teaches retarded children. He has been doing this work for many years. After he came in contact with me I told him to expose these children to yantras and mandalas. Since he was my disciple he did this experiment. You will be surprised to know that within one year the IQ level of the children improved by 75%. IQ means intelligence quotient. An intelligence test can assess the development of the brain.

In the brain there are millions and billions and trillions of archetypes and these archetypes are responsible for your intelligence and for your brilliance. When you practise concentration on mandala as well as on yantra, these archetypes explode like bombs. You have a lot of experiences in the mind, you feel sensations in the spine, you feel a burning sensation at the root of the spine, you see a lot of visions. This is called the working out of archetypes, therefore everyone should have one mandala for concentration.

If you want to know more about it you will have to read authentic translations of tantric books. I do not know of any such texts in Greek as yet, but in French, German and many other languages they have been translated. This process of mandala can also be used in psychotherapy. In fact, if you want to improve the intelligence of your children you must train them through mandalas. Especially, you must allow your children to concentrate every morning on some form that you keep for them in one corner of the room. In the course of time these children will develop a photographic system in the brain, then they will become talented geniuses in your society.

Thinking is not the ultimate achievement of mankind. I hope you are listening to me carefully. Thinking is not the ultimate achievement of mankind, feeling is not the ultimate achievement of mankind, remembering is not the ultimate achievement of mankind and logic is not the

ultimate achievement of mankind. The ultimate achievement of mankind is to be able to see an object in the mind as clearly as it is outside. When you close your eyes, can you see me as clearly as you can see me now? How long can you see me for? Can you see me like this for one second? That's an achievement, but if you can see me with eyes closed as clearly as when I'm here, for some period of time, say ten minutes, you're fantastic. Not just feeling, seeing. You see a separate reality within yourself. I'm a reality, but when you think about me in your mind, that is not a reality, that's just a feeling. When you can see me in your mind exactly as I am here, that is called a 'separate reality'. That is the ultimate capacity that the mind can achieve. If you are such a man then you can go anywhere, you are brilliant. As brilliant as a poet, as brilliant as an artist, as brilliant as musician, as brilliant as a politician, a writer, a scientist, because you can see things within you. This is the importance of mandala in the development of your mind.

What is the way for someone to learn tantra?

In order to learn tantra it is very necessary that you first understand what it is. It is not possible for me to tell you everything about it. The main hypothesis of tantra is as follows: whoever you are, you can become spiritual. You need not fight with your mind, you need not change yourself, but just do certain practices every day. Your relationship with your family and children is not against spiritual life. Matrimonial relationships should not be abandoned.

What is necessary? Certain practices. This, in short, is the way of tantra. Yoga is an off-shoot of tantra, but tantra is a little more than yoga and it is necessary for one to know about it and then to learn this from a teacher. The most important practices of tantra are: kriya yoga, number one; hatha yoga, number two; mantra yoga, number three and laya yoga, number four. These are the basic practices of tantra.

13

Inauguration Speech at the New Ashram

Panorama, Thessaloniki, 1 October 1982

For the yoga-minded people of Thessaloniki and for me, it is a very important event for us to be instrumental in this investigation. Ashrams are very necessary for the modern world because yoga-minded people want to have an opportunity to learn and live.

Revolution

It was in 1968 that I went on a world tour for the first time. I soon realized that people everywhere in the world are searching for themselves. It was at that time that the wave had already started in the West. I don't know if many of you can remember – that was the time when the whole of the West was passing through a phase of transition. This transition was a result of great frustration. After a century and a half or more of the industrial revolution, people in the West were facing a great crisis in their personal lives.

Initially, they had had great faith in this technology. They thought it would bring them nearer to peace and happiness. They thought and anticipated that this would bring nations and families closer, that this technology would bring people into one fold, but all their dreams appeared to be shattered. Technology brought them stress and strain, split the families, disturbed the social system, took man far away from himself,

created turbulence in his mind, made him more selfish, made him more self-centred and it was at that time, if you remember, that the hippy wave erupted and rebelled against society.

Of course, I'm not going to tell you that it was a very happy movement because it was the deepest agony of society that erupted in the form of hippies. Hippies did not come up from hell nor did they come down from heaven – they were our own products. We created them. The repressed society exploded all at once and the whole technological West was waiting for direction. When the society in the West could not give direction, nor the politicians, nor religion, then there was a social revolution. Hippies were a product of that revolution. The drug cult was a product of that revolution.

Personal responsibility

Nobody makes hippies, nobody takes drugs, we do it. If your family is in a state of disturbance the same thing will happen. The world is a very big family. Your family is a microscopic family. The whole world is a macrocosmic family. It does not merely subsist on prosperity, it does not merely subsist on a political system or on a good market, it has to rely on a sound philosophy, and this philosophy is not something which people talk about around a table. This philosophy has to be intimate with everybody, not only your monk or your priest, but also your father has to become a philosopher. Even a criminal has to become a philosopher, a politician, an ordinary labourer in the street or a scavenger has to become a philosopher. If you have monks and priests who are masters of philosophy, that has nothing to do with society and if you do not have a philosophy then your children will revolt.

Mission

It was during that period of revolt that I was touring the world. I sensed that the whole modern world was undergoing a state of frustration. At this time, what did India have to offer? Of course the West has offered a lot of things, but

whatever the western culture has offered, it has offered to the external man. It has offered him a nice bed and bedroom, but no sleep, it has offered social security, but no emotional security. There are two parts of your life. You are an external man and at the same time you are an internal man. All of your external, necessary needs are looked after by the modern culture, but the soul is completely and totally ignored. Many of you may be going to sanctum and sanctorum weekly or even daily, but that is not enough for the inner man.

So, I began to question what India has to offer to the western people. I travelled far in the Eastern countries and also to Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Tahiti, Hawaii, America, Europe, Africa, Middle East and European countries, and I came to a conclusion. That conclusion was that India has perhaps the most important thing, known as yoga. If India could give this yogic way of life to the rest of the world there would be, as I say, a great satisfaction.

Yoga

My calculation turned out to be precise. The West may or may not acknowledge this offering and we Indians don't really care about that, but surely yoga has penetrated into the depths of their lives, brought them closer to their own religion, given a better understanding of their own culture, and brought them closer to their family members. What is more important is the internal and external man are going to be integrated.

Since then I've been touring the world almost every month. Yoga schools have sprung up in different lands and yoga ashrams have been founded. In the beginning I had some difficulty from a certain section of society, but now things are very good. Doctors and scientists, engineers and professors, politicians and students, everybody is talking about yoga. It is with this feeling that this ashram comes together today.

Mahatma Gandhi

It is a coincidence that today is also the birthday of India's greatest modern man, Mahatma Gandhi. Those of you who

know about him need not be told, but those of you who do not, should know that in your world lived a man completely unbelievable in his character. You couldn't believe that such a man could walk upon earth; a man who hated none, a man who feared none, a man who was full of compassion, love and understanding. He lived a life of discipline and austerity throughout. When he made a mistake, he confessed it, not before God but before the public. It is easy to confess your sins before God. It is easy to confess your mistake or crime in front of an altar, but if you commit a murder or a sexual crime, if you steal somebody's property, can you make a public confession in a public newspaper? So, today is his birthday and today is also the birthday of your ashram here.

The early ashram

In 1964 I founded a small ashram in India. It was much smaller than this. It had only four rooms and the property was one tenth of this, but that ashram became the heart and it inspired thousands of people around the world. Today it is not that small ashram; today it is the biggest yoga ashram in the world. It can house seven hundred and fifty students with about forty staff and teachers. The ashram is working on many lines. People come there for treatment, for spiritual illumination, for sadhana and relaxation, from all countries and religions – Hindus, Muslims, Christians, including Communists. It is because yoga has given them something positive and something substantial.

In the beginning I had fifteen-day courses. I was the teacher and I was the cook and I was the guru. Many times I got very tired because people would come in such numbers. Now of course I am free of that difficulty. Later I had a three-month training course for teachers, then I had a one-month teacher training course. This one-month course became very popular. In the last few years we have produced thousands of teachers in India. Then I started yoga therapy courses. These courses were stretched from one week to an indefinite period and now are attended by people from every part of the world.

People suffering from arthritis, rheumatism, diabetes, blood pressure, they all come there. Women suffering from amenorrhea, dysmenorrhoea, prolapse, also go there. More people come from the West because in the western countries people are scared of the drugs. They do not want hormone injections or too many antibiotics because the research scholars say that if you take more of these hormones and antibiotics, it will create other diseases in the body.

Pure living

There are many people who come there in order to live in pure surroundings. In that town you do not have factories, you do not have rows and rows of motor cars, bars and pubs. We do not have any night life. After 8 o'clock we are with our families. Husband, wife, children, after 8 o'clock they are together, by 9 o'clock they are snoring, by 3 o'clock they are up. At 4 o'clock they take a bucket and go to bathe in the Ganga in the open: men, women and children together. A bathroom is not necessary. They walk one or two miles every morning, by 5.30 they come back. So that is the life there.

The ashram is situated on a small hillock, surrounded by the river Ganga like a garland. This is the concept of the ashram and such ashrams should be built throughout the world. Many times people come to the ashram with different diseases and they get better because there is an atmosphere, a discipline, a type of food and a program. We don't have medicine because it is not necessary.

Health and the mind

Diseases in the modern world are produced by the mind, not by bacteria and virus. They talk about infections, but they forget that thought is the greatest virus and thought can even affect your adrenaline and enzyme secretion. The force of anxiety can cause a heart attack. A sudden thought of anxiety can cause colitis. Unbalanced emotions can cause asthma, and respiratory diseases. Unsystematic and undisciplined life and food can cause peptic ulcers, gastric ulcers, and

duodenal ulcers. If a thought keeps coming into your mind, if a voice keeps coming in your mind every now and then, it can affect the skin surface and cause eczema.

Thoughts are even more contagious than external viruses. You have so much pollution in the West: air pollution, water pollution, food pollution, sound pollution, habit pollution and thought pollution. Don't think that this is the cause of the diseases. It's true that disease also originates from external sources. If you drink infected water you get bacilli and later dysentery, if you eat stale food you can get sick, but why do you get sickness in the West? Everything is inspected by the health inspector, standards are checked, food is untouched by hands, but still there are diseases. It means that it is necessary to control the mind and its effects.

Harmony in society

Now this ashram has come into being. Ashrams should be maintained by the people here. They have to fix a method, a system. It's very difficult for ashrams to survive here. In India it is very easy for ashrams to survive because we know they are necessary for a healthy society. There should be seminars, classes, gatherings and get-togethers and this place must be utilized for the common good of the people. Not only you but friends and acquaintances should spend more and more time in the ashram atmosphere and receive inspiration from the ashram. Of course the teacher who will be here will have certain limitations, but still I believe that the teacher will be able to give you a lot.

There is another important point in this. When either the husband or wife come to the ashram, the other party should not be alarmed, because everyone's emotional and spiritual needs cannot be the same. It is good if the husband, wife and children all practise yoga, but if only the wife practises and the husband does not, it is not a serious thing. Therefore, everybody who comes to the ashram should get maximum benefit, and if this ashram goes well, I will be coming to Greece again. I wish success to the ashram. I also wish that

you may participate in the ashram. Sometime, when you come to India, you can see the parent ashram.

In Europe we have an ashram in every country. First of all I established the ashram in Paris, now they are all over France. Then I established other ashrams in the Scandinavian countries, Copenhagen and Switzerland. Then came ashrams in Ireland, England, Spain, Italy and Germany. We established an ashram in Athens and Kalamata some years ago. Last year we established an ashram in Thessaloniki, not this one but another one, and I hope the interest will be so great that we will be able to run both ashrams at the same time. If more and more people come to practise yoga we should have classes in the old and new ashrams because Thessaloniki is a very big city and two ashrams are not enough. There should be many ashrams and many teachers.

Spiritual strength

Yoga is a very modern science and if you can inspire people to live this life, you will be doing a very great service not only to your society, but also to your nation. Nations and cultures survive on spiritual power. Military power, prosperity and affluence are not permanent things. Poor nations become richer and rich nations become poorer, but if the people of a country are spiritual and have a sound philosophy, they survive.

Happiness in the family, happiness between husband and wife and children comes only if there is a sort of discipline. When the family members, especially the elder members, lack discipline there is restlessness and conflict in the family. What is the use of having a family if they keep on crying every morning and every evening? The purpose of having a family is to share the joy of each other. You share all kinds of joys from children, husbands, wives, parents and the happiness that you give to each other should be natural happiness. When you say, “my darling”, it should be both natural and real.

A child's wisdom

Universities do not teach you personality; they do not teach you humanity; they teach you something with which you can earn your daily bread, with which you can survive in this complicated society. They do not teach you how to be happy. They do not teach you how to understand your marriage partner, children and friends. Therefore, how can you expect these things from the children? If you give them an example then you can expect it, but otherwise please keep quiet! We are undisciplined. We expect discipline from our children. Think for a while. Is it possible?

Children imbibe. You practise yoga, they will imbibe it. You respect each other, they will imbibe that. You practise discipline, they will accept it. You quarrel with each other morning and evening and they will imbibe that. Even if you just remain absent from your house up to 12 o'clock, 1 or 2 o'clock, they will imbibe it.

A child in the womb, a child in the cradle, a child who is grown up, all understand in equal measure. This child who is eight now, understood you more when he was in the cradle because he was registering your behaviour through his mental camera. Actually he did not understand it, he registered it and now he will develop and print it, and understand it and kick you. Once you bring the atmosphere of yoga into your family, you will find that your children become more mellow, more tender and more amiable.

We need and want disciplined swamis, we do not want careless swamis who just want to go out to nightclubs. We want responsible swamis who have enough social consciousness and who spend their time studying, teaching and practising, who do not talk all kinds of rubbish and do not try to practise samadhi by taking drugs and who do not want to practise tantra by means of sexual interaction. They should live like guardians of your children. If you are like that you can come to me. I do not want you to become a rogue. If you can live alone, if you do not have passionate desires and if you have compassion for society, love for yoga and a feeling for me, you should be ready.

14

Integral Yoga

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 2 November 1982

This is a very important meeting for everybody because I am making a departure from metaphysics to jump into the realm of experience directly. Your great philosopher Socrates said, “Know thyself”, and I know and history knows that he was not really understood.

The need for personal experience

Years rolled by. Greek people wanted to know themselves, but in the process of gaining knowledge of their own self they developed Epicureanism and Hedonism. These two schools of philosophy developed as miscalculations of the knowledge because Socrates did not tell them about the knowledge of the self. Philosophers who succeeded him explained what the self was. A system of metaphysical explanations followed for hundreds of years in your country, but theoretical knowledge will not give you an experience. Your teacher will tell you the truth, your philosophers will write volume after volume on truth, but you can experience according to the quality of your own mind and nothing beyond that. You may say anything to a blind man about the sun, but he can only see the sun according to his blindness. You may sing beautiful songs and hymns before a deaf man, but he can only hear what he is capable of. Knowledge and experience must go hand in hand.

I can talk about the self for hours together. You can write volumes about Socrates' statement, "Know thyself," volumes after volumes, but if you are not able to transform the quality of your mind, you are going to become an Epicurean or Hedonist. This, precisely, is the shortcoming of western philosophy. It has epistemology, beautiful, but when I ask the teacher how to experience it, he cannot possibly reply. It is in this particular realm that yoga has conquered the hearts of millions and millions throughout the world for centuries and centuries. It is the contribution of India to the rest of the world.

Transforming the mind

How to transform the mind? How to improve the quality of experience? How to transform the awareness of matter? How to bypass the turbulence of the mind? It is very easy to talk about transcendental matters, it is easy to talk about God and the self, about astral beings, etc. It is easy to describe paradise, but where are the eyes to see that? Where is the mind to experience, to see that? Thinking or contemplation cannot bring you to that point of experience, reflection also cannot bring you to that point of experience because reflection, contemplation and thinking are manifestations of the mind.

Mind is a limited instrument, handled by man, therefore the hypothesis is – let me first develop the instrument of perception. If one has to see the sun, one must have the eyes. If you want to have the perception of the object you must first remove the cataract in your eyes. Beyond the mind is the super-mind and the super-mind is not at all different from the mind. When your mind becomes free from turbulence, when your mind becomes free from distractions, when your mind transcends the idea of duality and conflicts, and loses its categories of time, space and object, then it is super-mind.

Even as you clean the mirror so you can see your face, in the same way you should make your consciousness free

from all sorts of thoughts and conflicts. You should not misunderstand me and think that I am trying to stop your mind. I do not mean that you should shunt your mind or withdraw the mind. When you close your eyes you do not close your mind. When you close the senses you do not close the mind; if you do, that is hypnosis. When you close your mind, your senses and intelligence, that is hypnosis, but when you close your outer eyes and open your inner eyes – that is called yoga.

Inner vision

What is that inner eye? You do not have to imagine the inner eye at the eyebrow centre. You do not even see the inner eye. When you see an inside object after closing the outer eye, that is the inner eye. You see me here with your open eyes. You see me with outer eyes, but if you close your outer eyes and you can still see me, that is called the inner eye. Therefore it is necessary, in order to open the mind within, that you have an object to perceive.

Of course, yoga is a vast subject and I cannot possibly talk about the whole of yoga this evening, but when I condense the subject of yoga I come to a specific point. If you want to open your mind then yoga suggests three basic points to you: the first is sound, the second is known as the diagram, the third is called mandala. In the language of yoga and tantra they are known as mantra, yantra and mandala. It is very important, therefore, for everybody to pay absolute attention to this topic. Mantra is sound, yantra is diagram and mandala can be two or three-dimensional. These are bases upon which you can develop your outer mind and transform it to a super-mind.

Mantra

The first base is called mantra. Mantra does not mean a holy or divine name, it does not even mean the name of gods and goddesses. It is a sound which can be experienced at different frequencies. The sound which I am producing has

a low frequency. If I lowered the frequency even more you would not be able to hear it and if I raised the frequency of the sound you would not be able to hear it.

The mind first of all accepts a sound, then it repeats the sound and, as you repeat the sound, it gains a higher frequency. At one stage the sound attains the highest possible frequency. At that time there is an explosion within the mind and then the mind comes out. What you know about the mind is not the mind, it is just the patterns of the mind. Anger, ambition, passion, worry – they are not the mind. The real mind is the hidden substance within each and everybody.

The first principle called mantra yoga, then you have to experience the manifestations of the mind. As you go on practising the mantra you go on expressing the totality of the mind. First comes the process of purging. The schizophrenic character of the mind expresses itself first and in the beginning it is not a very happy experience. Many times we make a mistake in the beginning when we try to meditate. When thoughts surge in the mind we suppress them because we have been taught the classification of good and bad. Whether it is a good experience or a bad experience, whether it is a good thought or a bad thought, it has to come out. When you are seated in the lotus posture and practising mantra, the subconscious mind, the deeper mind, purges itself. The purpose of mantra, the purpose of sound, is not to create concentration, but to clear the path for concentration.

Those of you who are sincere seekers should understand the difference between clearing the way and creating concentration. They are not one and the same thing. If you do not resolve the conflicts in your mind properly then they manifest at a higher state in meditation. They are known as astral experiences which do not mean anything. These astral experiences are very bewitching. You come out of your room and say, “Oh, I had a beautiful experience,” but it was nothing but a manifestation of the conflict, the schizophrenia and suppression which would have manifested otherwise if

you were careful. Therefore, the mantra should be practised without confrontation with the mind.

There is no direct entry into meditation. Meditation is the culmination of your total efforts. When the mind becomes composed, meditation begins. Tranquillity is not the result of meditation; knowledge is the result of meditation. Tranquillity, relaxation, is the result of withdrawal.

Yantra

The second base is called yantra. These yantras are diagrams and they were known to different cultures. Indians, Egyptians, Kabbalists, Babylonians and pre-Hellenic cultures all knew about the yantra. These yantras are mystic substances. There are not just a few, there are quite a lot and these yantras work upon the archetypes of the brain. These archetypes are the totality of man's experience, life after life. Each archetype is an experience of an act. What you experience when you dream is an experience of archetypes. When you understand me as a man or I understand you as a man, that is a result of an archetype. Every knowledge, every experience is present in you in an archetypal form.

If you look at a flower and appreciate it, you withdraw the flower within you. That flower is registered by your inner system, but it is not registered in the form of a flower; it is turned into a type called an archetype. In yoga we call it a samskara or karma and this archetype comes out during the experiences in meditation. These archetypes are sometimes very powerful. They contain the knowledge of life after life. They contain the seeds of clairvoyance, telepathy and extra-sensory perception. These archetypes express themselves in the form of art, painting, music and intuitive ideas. Whatever knowledge man has gained, whatever knowledge man has given, is an expression of an archetype. If you know how to explode the right type of archetype then you can completely change the quality of your mind. Maybe, through this, you can become a genius. Therefore, in tantric and yogic practices we take recourse to the use of yantra.

Mandala

The third thing is called mandala. This is very controversial. For thousands of years it has received kicks and blows from religious philosophers. God is formless. We accept it. God is nameless. We accept it, but you need a form to improve your limited mind. Our mind is so infirm, our mind is invalid, it cannot float through ideas – you close your eyes and say, “I am immortal.” What do you see? Abstractness, nothing but abstractness. If your mind is infinite, all right, but your mind is not infinite. Your mind is finite. It cannot understand anything which is beyond the finiteness. It needs a form to see, it needs a sound to hear. There are special people; they do not need a yantra. You must first of all be sure that you are that special person. If you are a special person you do not need these three, but how will you know whether you are special or not?

I will give you one exercise. Go back tonight and try to develop the experience of pain which you had a few years ago, in exactly the same way. Can you manifest the pain? Can you manifest the suffering? Could you cry at that time? If you can, you are a special person, certainly I bow my head to you, and if you are, then tomorrow please do not come to my meetings – I have not come here for special people. Now, remember the pain. You can remember the date, you can remember the time, the circumstances, the type of accident. You can remember the pain. Remember the pain, but nothing beyond that. If at the most you can only say, “Oh it was a terrible pain!” then you are not a special person. Come tomorrow and I will tell you more. It is such people who need mandala.

Never say that God has no form. We accept that he has no form, but you must say, “My mind has no form and therefore it needs a form.” You may need the form of a guru. You may need the form of a saint or a prophet, you may need the form of the moon, a star, a fire flame, a candle flame, a trident, a shivalingam or serpent. Well, I have just cited a few mandalas.

There are thousands of mandalas. You can draw them from human beings, you can draw them from any realm of nature, but a mandala has two or three dimensions. A picture, a painting or a photograph has two dimensions. I have three dimensions and the mind catches an object with three dimensions. If you do not like three dimensions then you can have two. Of course there is something which has no dimensions; there is something which has neither one nor two nor three dimensions, it has no dimensions and that called the fourth dimension.

Know thyself

That thing which is the fourth dimension – Socrates said, “Know that.” 1,500 years before, Buddha said the same thing. 3,000 years before the advent of Socrates, the Upanishads said the same thing. The central teaching of the Upanishads is, ‘know thyself’. In Sanskrit they say-*Atmanam viddhi*. The rishis, the saints and the seers asked, “Who am I?”

Two men were talking. One said, “I am a strong man with whiskers, moustache and beard.” The other said, “Hey, are you only that much? Are you not the mind?” The first said, “No, the mind is the brain, that’s all.” These people were known as demons. Those who consider the body to be the first, to be the last, the alma mater, they are demons. Then the second person said, “Who am I?” and went on meditating. Finally, he came to a point, “I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the senses, I am not these ideas, I am not this karma, I am not this experience. I am something beyond this. Then who am I?”

Then he went to a guru and said, “Guruji, I am not the body.” Guru said, “My child, you are all right.” He said, “I am not the mind.” Guru said, “My child, you are all right.” He said, “I am not the senses.” Guru said, “You are all right”. Then he said, “Guruji, who am I?” Guru said, “Can you find yourself from these finite manifestations? These are all acrobatic feats you have been doing. When you say, ‘I am not the body,’ you are aware of the body. When you say, ‘I

am not the mind, you are aware of the mind. When you say, 'I am not the senses,' you are living in the senses. Transcend reasoning, transcend logic and transcend intellect."

Then what to do? "Close your eyes, close your speech and close your ears," that is what a Sufi said. What does this reality mean? You want to know who you are? You will have to start right from the beginning. And where does yoga begin? Yoga does not begin with *dhyana*, meditation; yoga does not begin with the opening of the mind. Then where does it begin? Yoga stops with meditation, meditation is the epilogue of yoga, the conclusion of yoga, the essence of yoga.

Channelling energy

Yoga begins with karma yoga, dynamic association with the situations, events and cruelties of life. Karma yoga transforms the philosophy of your life, of your relationship with man and matter so you face life squarely and absorb its influences quietly. It is hard to tell you now. If you want to study I can tell you only one book that the world has given. You may agree or not, but there is only one book which teaches you to transform life into super life. The name of that book is the *Bhagavad Gita*. In short it is known as the *Gita* – live like a man, suffer like a man, face ordinary life like a man; you must have faith in God, but also you must have a definite philosophy of life which allows you to go further and further without renouncing life. There yoga begins.

The second chapter in yoga is 'balance your emotions'. You cannot love man completely, I can assure you. If you have millions of gallons of water and a small ditch to fill, what will happen, do you know? The ditch will become full and then the water will overflow. That is what is happening to everybody. That is what is happening to all of us. Everybody has so much love, we give it to our wives, our children, our fathers and mothers and friends, but still we have surplus love. What can we do with the surplus love?

Nature taxes you. You get frustrated because nobody can understand your love completely, therefore you must try to find an object to love in whom you can place all your love completely. God is the right place, but how to love God? We go to sanctum sanctorum and say, "God I love you, I love you, I love you." That is all acting, that is all emotion, intellectualized sentiment. If you truly love God you are liberated. One moment of sincere love is enough. You do not have to shout for twenty years, "I love you. I love you". It means you have been shouting in the darkness. We have not seen God. We have seen saints, we have seen gurus and masters. First give your devotion to them and you will have peace of mind. Sing kirtan in ecstasy for fifteen minutes, thirty minutes, forty minutes, forget yourself – get out of the mind, do not try to fight with the mind. With symphony, with music, with tunes get out of the mind and fill yourself with ecstasy. That is called bhakti yoga.

Hatha yoga, raja yoga and jnana yoga remain. The time is over and I know that I am not satisfied and I have to send you back thirsty. At the end, let me tell you just a few things. I have not come here to give you a philosophy. I have no cult. I have just one thing in my mind – I must tell everybody to have an experience. One ounce of experience is much better than tons and tons of theory. You are fortunate if you can just forget yourselves for a moment. You are fortunate if you can turn your gaze within. The mind which can see the external world should be able to see the internal beauty.

There are beautiful philosophies in the world. I like them. There are great religions in the world, I bow my head to them, but yoga is a system which tells you how to get the experience. It is not a system of narcotics, nor is it a system of psycho-narcotics. It is a combination of dynamism, emotional balance, rationality and deep inner awareness.

15

Introduction to Integral Yoga

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 3 October 1982

I am very happy to be here at the inauguration of this important seminar. These two day seminars work as an inspiration to many people who want to start the practices of yoga. We do not claim to give you a complete practice, of course, but we try to give you a glimpse of what exactly you will be doing in yoga. In yoga the first thing is a seminar and the next thing is a training course. After the training course you can carry on with your practices individually, then you can choose for yourself one particular way you want to follow throughout your life. In the beginning you should practise quite a few types of yoga in order to improve the body and the mind, but later you can choose one type of yoga for your daily practice and perfect the same.

In this seminar I have chosen quite a few practices for you. First are the yoga postures, second is the breathing, third is yoga nidra, and fourth is ajapa japa. These four practices are very important for you in your day-to-day life. Yoga postures are known to practically everybody and you know what they do for your health. The practices of pranayama are also very important and most people know what they do to your mind and body, but yoga nidra is very important and not many people know about it.

It is such an important technique that these days, throughout the world, people are eager to learn and practise it along with another practice which is known as ajapa japa. I intend to teach you both of these in order to initiate you into techniques of meditation including how you should concentrate on the breath and your psychic centres, how you should deal with your mind during the moment of concentration, and what you should expect when you are trying to concentrate your mind.

I know most people want to meditate, but closing the eyes is not the way to meditation. There are certain techniques which act as aids to meditation. These techniques are more important than the concentration itself. For example if you sit down with the eyes closed and watch the movements of the body this will help you a lot. It is not important that you should not move your body, you can move any part of the body, but you should know that you are moving.

In the same way, you know that you breathe throughout your life, but you never think about this. Breath is a very important way to concentrate the mind. If you concentrate on the even and natural flow of the breath you will find that you are able to concentrate better. You have many important psychic centres in the body. One psychic centre is in the middle of the forehead, others are situated in the framework of the spine. If you concentrate on each of the psychic centres for about a second or two and do this a number of times, you will automatically be able to meditate.

Individual techniques

It is difficult to say which particular centre in you is responding. Everybody has one or the other centre developed. Some can and will feel fine with the eyebrow centre and some will get better results from the cardiac centre. In order to find out which of the centres in you is more developed you will have to try all the centres for some time. If you can discover your centre then concentration becomes a very easy matter.

Whatever is said, the most difficult thing is how to be able to sit for at least half an hour. Some people have a very weak spine and if they try and sit upright for some time they just drop or there is pain in the spine. Some people have difficulties with their knees, others have difficulties with their ankles. After five minutes some get pain and cramps in the body. Therefore, for those people who want to have better concentration, discipline and training of the body is essential. I might say the physical body is the basis for good concentration.

This seminar is a glimpse for all of you. I believe you will be able to decide for yourself whether you should have further training in yoga. The last thing I want to tell you is that in this seminar what little you learn will go a long way through your life. There will be certain difficulties felt by you and you may not understand many things. With some of the yoga postures the younger people will be able to take a chance where older people should not attempt them, but in yoga nidra and the concentration practice there is no such limit or restriction.



16

Television Interview

Television interview with Mr Economou, Athens, 3 October 1982

What is yoga?

Yoga is a perfect practical system for health of the body, mind and personality. The science of yoga is composed of external postures and internal practices of concentration. The practices of yoga can take care of the human body, its difficulties and deficiencies. At the same time, yoga removes deep-rooted conflicts from the depths of the human mind. So, in short, yoga is a science for the development of the total personality.

What are the benefits that yoga gives to man? When did it start in Greece and how much response is there in Greece?

Yoga is beneficial for the individual, but at the same time it is also beneficial for the whole of humanity because it is a science which has brought natures, cultures and boundaries together. It has brought time and space under one canopy.

Yoga came to Greece in 1977 with one of my disciples who was residing here. Since then, a lot of work has taken place in this country, in Athens, in Thessaloniki and elsewhere. Yoga is flourishing at a great speed in this country because Greek people seem to be very much yoga-minded and they can understand how yoga relates to their mind, to their daily life, to their diseases, to their conflicts and their peace of mind.

Would it be possible to hear a mantra sound?

Om is a sound, *Ram* is a sound, *Kleem* is a sound, *Shreem*, *Aim*, *Bam*. There are so many sounds of different frequency. You have to repeat the same sound again and again, always the same. The frequency of sound changes according to the level of the mind. As the mind goes deeper the frequency goes higher or lower. You start pronouncing it at one frequency, but if you are pronouncing the sound and then your mind changes, the frequency also changes.

What is the meaning and importance of mantra? Could you explain what mantra means?

Mantra is a sound which makes the mind free from its obsessions. Just as you clean your dirty dresses with soap, in the same way sound can clean the mind of its impressions. Mantra is a very ancient word in Sanskrit. It is composed of two roots: one root means 'repetition' and the other means 'freedom', therefore, the literal meaning of *mantra* is 'by repetition of which the mind becomes free.' What we call the mind is not the pure mind. Our mind is coloured. Say, for instance, you have a white bed sheet. If you use it for a long time some other colour is added to it. In the same way the mind is mixed with impressions. We accumulate these impressions throughout our lives.

First of all these impressions should be cleaned. In order to clean these impressions, a sound has to be used because they are embedded very deep. It is not at all easy to expel these impressions. For example, if you are constipated for many days, what do you do? You take a laxative. Now, before taking the laxative you have a very bad feeling in your stomach, then your tongue is coated, you pass foul winds and get cramps every now and again, therefore you must remove the constipation. What happens when you take the laxative? You go to the toilet a number of times. The same thing happens to the mind.

When these impressions are embedded in the mind, the mind becomes negative, it has pain, it has fears, it has many negative elements. We do not know why that is happening.

You think that your wife is bad so you go on quarrelling, or your business is not going well and so you are unhappy, or your son or your daughter are not good and so you are worried, but that is not the cause. The world is not the cause of your unhappiness. Worries, anxiety, fears, passions, they are the boundaries of your mind, so you try psychoanalysis or you try to escape from the realities by going to the pictures, to clubs, this and that. It doesn't really help you. So, just as you take a laxative to clear the body, you can take a laxative to clear the mind also. Mantra is the laxative for your mind.

When you take a mantra from your guru, you should not expect concentration. If you are practising concentration with your mantra you are suppressing constipation, mental constipation. When you practise mantra, more and more depressions come out. Worries must come out, anxiety must come out, passions, fears and suicidal tendencies must come out; all that is foul must come out. That is the purpose of mantra and therefore mantra is a sound which, when repeated again and again, allows your mind to expel its impressions.

Many times we people make a mistake. We take a mantra from a guru and when we have practised it a number of times we get many thoughts rather than concentration and we think the mantra is powerless. Many times people come to me and ask for a mantra. I ask them, "Do you practise any mantra?" They say, "Yes, but I do not want mantra from that guru, it doesn't work." I ask, "How does it not work?" They say, "When I practise that mantra I get more disturbed." I say, "Exactly, that is mantra's mission."

When you take a laxative it must disturb your stomach; when you take a mantra it must disturb your mind – the subconscious mind must come out. You know we are human beings, social human beings; we belong to a society and a religion and a culture, we cannot behave completely freely. We have to have certain disciplines: national discipline, social discipline, religious discipline, family discipline and in order to discipline ourselves we have to suppress ourselves. If we do not suppress ourselves there will be chaos in society. If

we do suppress ourselves we accumulate impressions which create problems within our personality.

You must understand this very well—we are all suppressed souls. I have to suppress myself. I have to suppress myself before all of you. Many times I want to tell you things frankly, but I cannot. I would like to say that you are wrong, but I do not say it because if I do you will be disturbed and our relationship will be disturbed. Some way you have to take care of your parents and your family, you have to take care of the police and law, they are essential disciplines for family and society. Therefore, throughout your life from your childhood you are accumulating unexpressed symptoms. Sometimes it is too much so we fall ill, sometimes it is very little, but that also affects our personality.

So, the way is timely clearance through mantra. Every morning you must practise the mantra, let the depressions come out. Every night practise mantra, let the depressions come out. It is like cleaning your apartment every morning and every night. Just as you clean your kitchen, your house, do you clean your mind?

How do you clean the mind? That is very difficult. Just by trying to be ethical you cannot clean the mind, nor just by trying to act morally. On the other hand it can cause depressions. In yoga the most powerful method is called mantra, but still people do not practise it methodically. When they practise mantra they become tense and practise concentration. You must take the mala in your hand and practise, “*Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya*”, mentally and let the mind manifest disturbances. Whenever thoughts come, let them come, do not control them, but you must see what they are. With one mind you must do mantra, with the other mind you must see what you are thinking. This will happen for a long time, it can be one year, two years or twenty years, everything depends on how careful you are. If you are careful with your thinking, later on the time will be shorter. If you repeat the same mistakes, psychological and emotional mistakes, it will take many years.

Now, on one hand you are cleaning your stomach, on the other hand you are taking your food carefully. It is not good to clean your stomach and then take all kinds of rubbish immediately. Then you have to take a laxative every day and go to the toilet twenty times daily. You must take a laxative and go to the toilet to clear the stomach and then take care that the same mistake does not happen again, you must eat carefully. It is the same with mantra. When the explosion is going on, you must be careful with your thinking process. During that time you must read books of positive knowledge, you must meet and associate with people of positive nature and from time to time you must take to fasting. From time to time you must analyze all the negative tendencies of the mind and then what will happen? Suddenly the mind will switch off, without your efforts it will switch off. It will just stop and then the inner awareness will dawn in you. You do not have to pull the mind, the mind will do the whole thing by itself.

This is the general definition of mantra, the spiritual purpose of mantra, but mantra has many objectives. Mantra is a very powerful substance. It can expand your mind. It can stretch the mind. The mind can radiate like light. There are mantras practised in order to create effects in the objective fields. You know about black magic. The Greek people should know about it. There are what are called charms, mantras used to create certain effects. It is not just psychological, it is real. There are some people who have the capacity to do it. These people are born psychic, everybody can do it. There are certain people who are born psychic, what do you call them? Witches, sorcerers – right? These people can use a mantra for creating an effect.

So, mantra is not only for accomplishing spiritual life, it is also for creating effects in the objective field. Mantra should not be misinterpreted as a divine name; it is just a sound or a combination of sounds. These sounds were discovered by seers in deep states of meditation thousands of years ago. Each sound has certain frequencies, each sound has a colour, a specific gravity and each sound has a distinct effect. These sounds are of two types: one is called

the mantra and the other is called the bija. *Bija* means 'seed'. Bija is potential sound, like having a seed.

You must definitely believe and understand that sound can attain higher frequency. It can be given higher frequency because sound is not just voice, sound is a form of energy and this energy operates on lower, middle and higher frequency. When you produce a sound it has a low frequency. My sound has a low frequency and your hearing capacity works at a low frequency therefore you are able to listen, but if there is a mosquito here it cannot hear anything because the frequencies are not suitable. There have to be suitable frequencies for speaking and hearing.

When you think a sound in your mind, it attains high frequency and when you feel a sound in your mind, it has very high frequency. If you imagine a sound that somebody is producing and that you can hear inside you, it attains the highest frequency, and the sound can attain such a high frequency that it can become an objective force. The science of mantra is infinite and in India it is a special practice by itself. Hindus consider mantra greater than God. Therefore, mantra is a very important aid in spiritual life.

Are the archetypes the memory of the cells of the body or another type of memory?

Archetypes are impressions which we register in one or more lives and these archetypes are very subtle in nature. I will give you an example so that you can understand. At the age of two a baby is sleeping in the cradle, then her eyes open. Suddenly some murderers open the door and come into the house. Her mother is sitting by the side of the cradle. These bandits, these dacoits pull the ornaments from her mother's neck, arms and hands. She does not resist, but she is frightened. In the mean time her husband comes in. The moment he enters the door the dacoits fire at him and he dies, and they run away with the ornaments.

The baby understands nothing, but she is registering everything, just like a hidden camera is registering everything.

She grows to the age of ten, twelve, fifteen, twenty-five and does not remember this incident at all and her mother also does not tell her anything about it. Then once, in a dream, she sees the experience re-enacted. Out of fear she wakes up and her mother asks her, "What is happening to you?" She relates her dream and her mother tells her, "Yes, it happened when you were two years old." This dream was an expression of the archetypes.

When we experience anything in our lives, it is registered by the subtle body, but not in the same form as it happens; the whole experience is reduced to a symbol. There is no cradle, there is no mother, there are no men, there is no revolver, there is no death, all these pictures are not there, there is just the symbol, and these symbols are mostly pictorial. At some time, due to something or other, these symbols re-emerge on the conscious plane. Then the whole script is re-enacted.

We are sitting here. I am talking to you about yoga. It is definitely an event which your eyes can see, your ears can hear and your mind can understand, so it is being registered. You can re-enact it after one or two or five years. You can also re-enact it after your death in this life, that is, in your next life, but the form in which this whole incident is being registered and recorded within you is not in this gross way.

These symbols are known as archetypes and there are millions and trillions of these signs. They are also known as karma and, in the doctrine of karma, they are known as samskara. When a gross experience is reduced to a sign it is called a samskara. Have you seen an avocado or mango tree? You must have. Have you seen the seed also? When you see the seed, can you see the mango tree there? It is there in archetypal form.

I will try to explain to you what the science of archetype is. You can cut up each and every part of the mango seed, you will never find the mango there. You can use every kind of microscope, but you will never see the mango there. Still, it is a mango tree; it will never grow into an avocado tree. Surely it is never an avocado tree. A mango seed is a symbolic mango tree. So, your gross life is reduced to

subtle samskaras and many times these samskaras come out. They come out through one sign or another. Where these archetypes remain is very difficult for me to explain. It is not in your mind, it is in your consciousness, but at the time of expression they come out through signs.

How can it be explained that when you have a negative reaction towards a person, they have a similar reaction?

Hindus have a wonderful tradition about which you should know. When marriage takes place it never takes place between people of the same zodiac sign. If you are Taurus and your wife is Taurus, you are going to have the same problems as each other. You have to be of different natures, not the same nature. Many times, when you come across or live with people of the same nature you have problems with them, and this incompatibility between the two persons is due to emotional monotony.

Temperamental differences are necessary to decrease the monotony and thereby increase the attraction for each other. You have such problems very often in Western countries because here there is a tendency of trying to have friends of the same nature – husband and wife of the same temperament, this man and that man of the same religion, and not different. This is the tendency in your country. If the husband practices yoga and the wife wants some other life, she does not accept it. He thinks, “My wife must also practise yoga”, and she thinks, “He should also come along with me.”

These negative tendencies between two individuals of identical nature are very natural. Just as in your garden you have many types of fruit trees and many types of flowering plants, in the same way a family can have one who is a Christian, another a Muslim and another who is a yogi. One goes to the pictures, another to night-clubs and one to the yoga ashram – perfect. You should not try to convert the other party to your philosophy and to the kind of life that you lead – that is wrong!

What is the difference between yoga exercises and other kinds of exercises?

First of all, you must know that 'yoga exercise' is not the correct word. Traditionally, they are known as yoga postures and there is a fundamental difference between yoga postures and other exercises which scientists have been assessing. I do not mean to criticize exercises, they are very necessary for the development of the body and muscles, but there are many differences.

The first difference is that in yoga postures the consumption of oxygen is minimal and in physical exercises it is maximum. Secondly, in yoga postures the respiration falls and during exercises it goes very high. Thirdly, in yoga postures the body temperature falls, in exercises the inner body temperature goes very high. Fourth, in yoga postures the metabolic rate slows down and in exercises it becomes very fast. Fifth, yoga postures arrest catabolism while exercises create catabolism. Sixth, in exercises the muscles receive the most nutrition at the expense of the other organs; in yoga muscles receive minimum oxygen, other organs receive more. Seventh, in yoga the heart receives a gradual increase of pressure, whereas in exercises pressure rises quickly and the pressure is also released very fast. Eighth, practitioners of yoga need minimum food, while people doing physical exercises need maximum food to survive.

These are some of the differences, but there are certain specialities in yoga postures. One special thing is the hormonal activity seen during yoga postures which you do not see in exercises at all. Secondly, another speciality is the extra electrical impulses generated by the autonomic nervous system.

Well, these are all the differences and specialities, but there is one thing which no exercise can provide at all; only yoga can give it – awareness of inner life. If people have to be made to turn in towards themselves, then for that, yoga stands highest.

17

Meeting with Doctors

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 4 October 1982

Science has been studying yoga for some time. Earlier, yoga was understood as a philosophy and some sort of metaphysics was attributed to it. But when the travellers from western countries came to India they studied the science of yoga and, when they went back to the West, they investigated it. Now, as I am talking to you this evening, the picture of yoga is more or less complete, but surely it will take some more time to formulate the theory of yoga for the purpose of scientific utility. In fact, it also took medical science centuries to establish itself. So, you can understand why it is taking some time for yoga to be formulated, though scientists in the East and West are now engaged in deep research on the effects of various yogic sciences.

International research

At present, an eminent doctor in Melbourne is doing a lot of work on cancer therapy through yoga. His name is Dr Ainslie Meares. He has been a surgeon, a physician and a neurologist for over forty-five years, serving in the medical departments in Australia. He has been working on is pranayama, meditation and deep relaxation. At the University of Tasmania in Hobart they have investigated the effects of yoga meditation on various processes in the body.

In fact, volumes and volumes of research have been recorded in the last ten years documenting what happens to various functions in the body when one is meditating. Not only the psychic effects of meditation have been investigated, but the transition that takes place in the realm of the physical body during the higher practices.

In the early 30's and 40's Carl Jung, an eminent westerner, wrote books and papers on the effects of kundalini yoga. How postures, or yoga in general, influence the brain, consciousness and other factors in the body has been amply studied. Dr Aleksandrowicz, Dr Rombowski and Dr Tadeusz Pasek were pioneers of yogic research, with their first startling research in Poland in 1962. Dr Benson started his research in America four decades ago, but the earliest research was done by Dr Willis, also in America. He felt that the yoga exercises were not only physical exercises, so much so that other scientists were to carry out research into what happens to various processes in the body during yogic practices. Sometime in 1972, I read a very detailed report in the magazine *Soviet Land* on the training in the practice of pranayama that astronauts received. The magazine indicated that the purpose of this training was to increase the body's vitality, strengthen the nervous system, coronary behaviour and the brain. In Czechoslovakia many doctors are working through their medical council on yogic research. Last year I had a seminar at a medical college in Paris with eminent doctors on the discussion panel. This is just a glimpse into what is happening in the field of yogic research.

This year I visited Japan and met with one great scientist, Dr Hiroshi Motoyama, an eminent medical doctor in Tokyo. I have followed his research for many years. In his early work he involved himself in the phenomena of acupuncture and while he was researching this he came across yogic science. One yogi from India was visiting him. Until then Dr Motoyama did not know much about yoga, but this yogi told him about pranayama, the breathing technique which is a combination of inspiration, retention, expiration, and

controlling and contracting certain centres in the body. Dr Motoyama wanted to investigate so this yogi was subjected to scientific experimentation.

In fact, this was a great experience for Dr Motoyama. For years he had been trying to control the energy blocks in the body through the science of acupuncture, but when he began observing the effects of pranayama on the energy flows, he was startled to find that energy flows were cleared during the process of pranayama. When I met him last year in his lab he told me all about his experiments and he has come to the conclusion that by the practice of pranayama you can increase the frequencies of energy in the body.

In India at present there are many research projects going on, aided and recommended by the central government in the field of yoga therapy. The Indian Medical Association has concluded that yoga gives a definite cure for diabetes mellitus through consistent and repeated research being conducted under the supervision of the Health Ministry of India for many, many years.

In 1968, the Central Government of India gave me a grant for a research project which was conducted with the help of many doctors in a medical college hospital in India. The subject for research was the effects of yoga postures on coronary diseases. Eminent cardiologists were leading the research and I was coordinating it. There were twenty on the panel, belonging to many faculties, not only cardiology. For five years, more than one thousand coronary patients were referred to the faculty of yoga. Of course the conclusion has not yet been drawn, but one thing has emerged very clearly: yoga can definitely help in the rehabilitation of heart patients. This is completely opposite to the views held by doctors earlier, when they used to advise heart patients not to do anything. This conclusion is final, but we are working more on this project and we are sure that yoga will emerge as a permanent therapy in cardiovascular diseases.

Let me tell you what yoga is, not the philosophy and the metaphysics, let me classify it in my own way. The faculties which have been investigated so far are: yogic postures, yogic

breathing, yogic relaxation, concentration and meditation, and kundalini yoga. Out of these, most researches deal with yogic postures, yogic breathing and meditation.

Effects of yoga postures

Yoga postures are thought to be exercises in the West, but according to the conclusions from the research, they are not exercises at all. There may be movements in the body when you do them, but you can't say that they are exercises because it has been found that during yoga postures the consumption of oxygen in the body is minimum, which is not the case in physical exercises. It has also been noticed that, during yoga postures, the respiratory rate falls and consequently there is minimum pressure exerted on the coronary system which is definitely not true with physical exercises. Therefore these yoga practices are considered to be postures, not exercises.

The way you perform them has much more to do with the nervous system and intra-organic processes than with the muscles. During certain yoga postures they find that hormones are especially secreted and circulated in the blood vessels. There are certain practices which have a special relationship with the adrenal glands. Other postures have a direct relationship with the thyroid or pancreas and there are certain yoga postures which maintain a balance between the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems. As a result of balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, many psychosomatic illnesses can be easily passed over.

During periods of anxiety there is always the problem of hyperacidity and therefore people who are suffering from ulcers, like peptic ulcers, gastric ulcers and duodenal ulcers are the people who are anxious and worried by nature. As a consequence of their nature, which is ridden by anxiety, they produce more acidity than can be assimilated by the body, therefore the practices of yogic relaxation come to pacify this process.

You can control anxiety, not necessarily by meditation, but by bringing about a certain state in the relationship

between sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Anxiety may be a consequence of the physiological state, or a physiological symptom may be the consequence of anxiety, therefore a disease symptom is not merely psychosomatic, it could be somopsychic. In one case they can be treated through medical science, but in other cases we try to create a balance between the two systems of therapy.

These yoga postures are numerous and it is not necessary for me to tell you a lot about them. Some are inverted postures, some are forward or backward bending postures, some are dynamic and some static postures, and there are certain postures which relate exclusively to the energy flows in the body.

In yoga the philosophy is very simple. It presupposes two points of energy in the body. I am using the word 'energy' exactly in the sense of energy. I am not using the word with a philosophical connotation. Just as you have energy in the electrical cables, of course it is a higher voltage, in the same way yoga postulates two kinds of energy in the physical body. These two kinds of energy are known as consciousness and light. Consciousness is not a consequence of matter. In yoga, thought is not a consequence of the brain. Consciousness and matter are two entirely different things according to yoga. Prana is known as light. It controls all the organs, mobility, temperature, digestion, span of life, etc. While you have prana you are alive. Lack of prana means death. Prana is one type of energy. The second energy is known as consciousness. You can call it the mind also, but consciousness is better. This consciousness is responsible for awareness, for knowledge, for the senses, cognition and perception.

These two forces are distributed throughout the body by a network of nerve channels. The sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, in our scientific terminology, represent these two forces. These two systems control the different organs of the body like the kidneys, heart, lungs, and pancreas and there is a constant flow through each and every organ all the time. When there is a block in the process of energy, disease occurs.

Here is a very simple example which everybody can understand. From the powerhouse, the electricity comes to your house. It comes to the main switch, then it is distributed to different circuits in each and every room in your apartment. If something is fused somewhere, that particular circuit does not work. It may be because it has been overworked or it may be that there is a short circuit. Whatever the cause is, that particular circuit does not work as long as you do not repair the fuse.

The conducting network

According to yoga there is a network of 72,000 channels in the body for each energy. Also the spine is considered to be a mere assemblage of discs, one over the other. Within the framework of the spine there are six important centres and distribution of these two forms of energy takes place to every part of the body through them. These two energies must work in harmony, in balance. That is the program of yoga, and *yoga* means 'harmony'. I am not talking about social harmony. I am talking about harmony in the physical body.

When there is disharmony there is a disease, either a physical disease or a psychic disease. When pranas are at their lowest ebb you have physiological disease, when the consciousness is at its lowest ebb you have psychic disease. So physiological disease should be counteracted through yoga postures and yoga breathing, and psychic diseases must be counteracted through relaxation and meditation, but yoga has been going beyond this. Yoga therapy is going to be a science sooner or later. First it may be a preventive science, then let it be a curative science, but eventually it has got to become a promotive science.

Conscious evolution

Let me introduce myself. In India I run the biggest yoga centre in the world with a capacity for seven hundred indoor patients, dealing with respiratory diseases, digestive disorders and psychological disorders. Patients come from all over the world. I have this introduction about myself, but yoga has

got something more to offer to mankind. The practices of yoga help man to evolve his consciousness. Consciousness is a reality. Man was primitive. He was a barbarian, he was a cannibal; today he is not. There is evolution of consciousness in the realm of nature. Man began to sing poetry and to paint. He began to talk about compassion, love, charity and mercy. This is metamorphosis in the realm of mind.

I am not talking about physical metamorphosis. I am talking about metamorphosis in the realm of consciousness, which is related to nature. Evolution is going on naturally and spontaneously. In millions of years you will be different people. In millions of years your brain will feel differently and act differently, but that is if it is left to the laws of nature.

If you can study those laws of nature, then you can apply yoga. Then you can accelerate the evolution of this process. The scientists have been doing the same. They have studied the laws of nature. They are accelerating the process. We can study the laws of consciousness and thereby we can evolve the whole thing faster, and yoga will accomplish this.

We have to accept yoga on two grounds. First, on the medical and scientific grounds which are going to be a reality sooner or later. Second, on the grounds of the process of metamorphosis of consciousness for a brighter new world. All of you who are seated here are the thinkers of our new society. You have studied the laws of the body and its function, but do you know the laws of the mind? Do you know what life is and what it means? As scientists number one and as human beings number two, you have to accept both these reasons for the propagation of yoga.

Before I conclude I must tell you there are hundreds of publications on the scientific studies of yoga. All of you should go through these manuals so that, through your medical science, you can treat a disease and through yoga you can treat patients. Your science treats the diseases, but I am sure it ignores the patient. It is important that you treat both the disease and the patient. If you integrate yoga, then you can take care of both the disease and the patient.

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Satsang

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 4 October 1984

How do we distinguish between a real and unreal guru?

A very difficult question, because I have never met or known an unreal guru. Whatever man I have come across in my life, I have learned something from him. Like a honey bee I went to every flower and collected pollen. Therefore, you should be like a honey bee. Even as you are talking about an unreal guru, a guru can also come across an unreal chela. Sometimes disciples are also unreal.

First of all you must reflect upon yourself, then you must have association with wise people from time to time, then you must read quite a few books in order to improve the quality of your inspiration. Then you must decide to have a guru. By this time the range of your consciousness should be wider and at this time, if you are in search of a guru, you will never get a guru who will frustrate your spiritual energy.

The Indian tradition is that a guru should not be chosen by virtue of his public speaking or propaganda. A guru should not be after interest – that's very important. Therefore, you must first equip with the virtues of a disciple, then you will get a real guru, but still I do not know. I have tried to think about this and I hear about it from here and there, but I have not come to a conclusion because I think it is something lacking in both of them. It's like the husband

seeing sex in the wife and the wife seeing sex in the husband; guru talking about a bad chela and bad chela talking about bad guru. Are you sincere about your spiritual aim? If you are sincere, even an unreal guru can be your true guide. Whatever the quality of a guru is, he can cheat everybody except a sincere disciple.

Can you please explain the meaning, purpose and benefit of mantra?

I have been replying to this question for the last thirty years – hundreds of times. Sometimes I feel it is better if I don't talk about it. Why should people talk about the intricacy of mantra and why should they ask me what a mantra is if they already know? In every culture the importance of mantra is known to the people. Hindus know about mantra, the Jewish culture knows about mantra, Egyptians and Greeks know about mantra. In every part of the world we hear that mantras are being used in different places. The negative aspects of mantra are also known to the people. Many times people tell you, "He has thrown a charm on me."

You think you know about mantra, but anyway, since you have asked me the question, let me reply. Mantra is a Sanskrit word composed of two roots: one root means 'repetition', the other means 'freedom'. 'Repetition and freedom' is the meaning of the word *mantra*. It should not be misunderstood or misinterpreted as 'divine name'. Mantra is a sound and sound is a form of energy, a powerful energy which can influence the mind.

In order to experience meditation and samadhi, you need a certain type of mind. Those who practise meditation without preparing the mind do not have the right type of experience. When you meditate, the mind goes into the subconscious and unconscious plane and there it visualizes its own nature and its own contents. Therefore, before the practices of meditation, you should clean the mind. The sounds that I am talking about clean the mind of its impurities and impressions.

In the human mind there are millions and billions and trillions of impressions embedded. You have a great past hovering in your mind, not only of this incarnation, but also belonging to other incarnations. Before concentration, it is necessary to make the mind lighter by the practice of mantra, therefore when you practise mantra you should not try for concentration. Mantra does not mean concentration and concentration is not necessary. If you can make your consciousness clean, concentration becomes spontaneous.

Those people who have a mantra from their guru should listen to me carefully, because I am not an intellectual – I've been practising for over fifty years. When you practise your mantra, you should let your mind flow because your mind is filled with lots of suppressions and agonies. Suppressing the tendencies of the mind will hinder your spiritual experience. When you take the mantra and practise it, you should just repeat it either verbally or mentally. If you experience turbulence and dissipation in the mind, just let it be. You should be bold enough to just let it be and face yourself. You must face your own frustrations, ambitions, passions and everything else that the mind is, and for that purpose you must completely detach yourself from the wanderings of the mind. Even as you look at the television, in the same way you should look at the television of the mind.

Mantra should be practised in the way taught by your guru. There are thousands of sounds in the universe, but the universal sound is *Om*. *Om* represents time, space, object and transcendence. Apart from *Om* there are many thousands of sounds in the universe existing at high frequencies. You cannot hear them now, but some people who raise the frequency of their own minds can hear those sounds. Those sounds which they hear are known as mantras.

There are many qualities and types of mantra, but they are generally classified into three: mantras which have gross effects, mantras which have spiritual effects and mantras which have mundane effects. Then there are two types of mantra: one is known as *bija* or 'seed'; the other type is a

combination of many sounds. These combinations of sounds are combinations of various frequencies. Each sound has a frequency; no two sounds have the same frequency. 'Aa' is one sound 'Ka' is another sound, each has a different colour from other sounds. No two sounds have the same colour.

There are certain sounds which, if combined, have great power. I must try to make it clear to you. Three or more sounds of low frequency, if properly combined, can attain high frequency. Therefore you will find many mantras with more than one syllable. *Om* is monosyllabic, but other mantras are not monosyllabic. Besides *Om*, only the bija mantras like *Kleem*, *Aim*, *Hreem*, and *Shreem* are monosyllabic. These monosyllabic mantras are intended to purify the mind with greater speed.

So, when we talk about mantras we are talking about the sound energy in the universe. You have many kinds of energy you know: electrical energy is one type, nuclear energy is another. In the same way, sound is also energy and it can transmit the waves of energy through space. A mantra is so powerful that it can create an effect within you and it can also create an effect on the object in the universe.

When you receive the mantra from your guru, you are actually receiving a portion of energy from him in the seed potential form. When you practise the mantra, if it does not give concentration it does not matter, because in the first stage, the mantra creates more explosions in the mind and then concentration comes by itself.

Mantra is the basis of yoga, mantra is the basis of tantra and mantra is the basis spiritual life. Mantra can give contentment and mantra can influence your character and personality. Mantra can bring about communication between individuals on the astral plane. Mantra can influence the brain and the mental faculties of children.

Can you tell us about yoga nidra?

Yoga nidra is one of the most important practices derived from tantra. In the last thirty years, yoga nidra has become

known throughout the world for spiritual perfection and therapy. It is not concentration, in fact you should not concentrate in yoga nidra. It is a scientific practice. The different organs in the body are connected to different parts of the brain gyrus and when you think about the different parts of the body, then this stimulus is transferred to the higher centres.

During scientific experiments it has been seen that when you practise yoga nidra, alpha waves change immediately. If you practise yoga nidra for a period of about twenty minutes you will find changes taking place in the respiration, in the brainwaves, in the body temperature and the skin resistance. I have myself formulated a scientific research project in India, aided by the Central Government from 1968 to 1973. I taught yoga nidra to more than one thousand patients suffering from coronary diseases and I found that for people suffering from stress and strain, yoga nidra is the best. From 1968, psychologists in France were working on the yoga nidra practice I discovered and this practice was taught to mental patients as well as children and housewives. It was found that the practice of yoga nidra is very important for people who are not able to concentrate their minds at all. For people suffering from nervous breakdowns, who are not able to handle the mind even for one minute, yoga nidra is the best. Later, when I wrote a scientific treatise on yoga nidra, it was translated into every language of the world and medical authorities all over the world now refer to that book.

How do we find God inside us?

God is inside, God is outside and God is on your bones. In order to find God, it is necessary for everybody to sit down quietly every day within themselves. Then they should transform their philosophy of life, transform the purpose of their incarnation, then understand the relationship they have with everybody and then reflect upon the relationship between this external body and the inner being.

It is said that by true bhakti you can realize God, see God within you, but sometimes I find bhakti very difficult because we are emotionally bankrupt. All the emotion, all the devotion, all the love is squandered. You have the objects of the world which are so fanciful. You cry and scream and shout for these things which are so brief in life. Find out who you love day in and day out. Please find out how much love you can give to God. Do you love God as much as you love your son? Do you love God as much as you love your girlfriend? Do you feel for God or remember Him as much as you remember your bank balance? I can give you thousands of examples from your life where you have failed to spare even a little love for Him.

Our love for God is intellectual. Our love for the things of this world is actual. Why don't you change the picture? So hard! So hard! Then your love for the world becomes intellectual. Can you intellectually love your wife and husband? Can you have intellectual love for your children? Can you have intellectual love for your bank balance and property and poverty? Then it will take a twinkling of an eye to get that experience. Otherwise, no matter how much I talk of religion, nothing will happen.

Once a disciple asked his guru, "How can I see God within?" The guru replied, "Why don't you cry out for Him?" The next day the disciple went to the sanctum sanctorum and started crying, "God I want you, I want you." He went on waiting and watching. The guru said, "Good drama my child," then he took the disciple on a journey. The guru and the disciple were travelling by boat. When the boat was halfway across the river he dropped the disciple into the water and then the disciple started crying and screaming and waving, "Oh, help!" The guru said, "Come on. Come out. Have you ever cried like that for God?"

The disciple understood, but you can do it better. You can do these things for the one you love, but how to love that formless God? Whether he's white or black or brown or yellow nobody knows. Guru tells us that he has all those

symptoms. Books say he's very different, "Oh yes, that's it," but still experience does not happen. Therefore, it is better that everybody should try and awaken the self and this is the prime purpose of our incarnation on this planet. To eat, to sleep, seek security, to have sensual pleasure – these are also meant for animals. Man stands out first by one virtue; the moment he becomes aware he must think, "How can I see God in myself?" Then he should devote himself to the attainment of that experience.

How does your mission compare with Swami Sivananda's mission?

I think I should let you know who Swami Sivananda was. Swami Sivananda was born in India in 1887. After graduating as a medical doctor he became a swami. He did great sadhana. He attained high illumination. He was one of the greatest enlightened persons I have ever seen. I went to him in 1943. Before that I had met practically every guru, but when I found him in 1943, I got the light.

I lived with him up to 1956 and it was a time about which I can say nothing – it was fantastic. I feel proud that I was born and lived with him. Many times I read about Christ. I never believed that such a man could live at all. Compassion, love, consideration for others are difficult things to find, they are not intellectual things, they are born out of the human self. In Swami Sivananda I felt there was a man who could see the whole of humanity as a part of his own guru. He had no attachments yet he loved everybody. He was large-hearted yet he was disciplined and his life was a constant sacrifice.

Anyone who came to him for anything, he gave it. He was very powerful. Thousands came to him for relief from sickness yet he never directed a drama. He would never say, "Okay child, you will be all right, get out, I've met you," never. He would listen very carefully and would say, "I will pray for your health and by the grace of God, I'm sure you'll be all right." He healed millions, but he never claimed it.

At the end of his life, just before leaving the body, he wrote two sentences. His disciples at the time of death asked him, "What is your message to humanity?" He did not speak, he took a pen and wrote down, "God prays with you, everything else is unimportant." It was his last message to mankind.

In this short period it is not possible for me to tell you all about him because I don't like to talk a lot about my guru. Well, I love him, that is my business. You must have your own guru; you must have the same feeling for him.

In 1956, in the morning of 19th March, he called me to his cottage and he told me that the institution was not enough to hold me; I must go away, into the wild world to do what I can see and understand. He gave me some money and taught me kriya yoga in five minutes and I left him on the 19th March 1956. You know, he made things very clear to me. He said, "In 1923 you were born, in 1943 you came to me, in 1963 you'll start working yourself, in 1983 your institution will come to a close and after that your work will be for the cosmos." So therefore I am working to his instructions.

My philosophy is different from his because I can't teach that. I will teach what I think is best; his philosophy is very difficult – "Love all." How to love? "Surrender yourself to God." How to do it? "Don't have ego." How not to have it? "Sacrifice everything to others." I don't know how to do it. Intellectually I understand everything, but I can't practise love, I can't practise compassion. I've tried and tried, and failed. Then I lost belief in that. I can practise yoga. I can withdraw myself completely, I can stop my mind and my breath, but I can't practise love, I can't practise compassion, I'm not selfless. I will teach what I can do. And he said, "After 1983."

Only a person who has realized himself completely can be compassionate. When you dissolve your little ego in that cosmic ego, then you realize the self and not before that. Even if you can stop your mind, still it is not realization.

Even if you can stop your breath, this is not self-realization. Even if you can transcend time and space and object, still it is not realization. A man of self-realization can live beautifully in this beautiful world of great varieties. When I get it I'll come back to you so you can meet that man. I'm going to come, because my guru told me, "1983". Afterwards my mind will become cosmic – this is intuitive vision.

Teach yoga, heal everyone, help them. When one realized the self, everything happens. Self-realization does not come by your own efforts. Grace of God and grace of guru are behind it. If you want it, it can happen here and now. If He doesn't want it, no asana, no pranayama, no yoga, nothing can give you self-realization. Where is the self? Not in the past. It is here and now, nearer than your own breath, closer than your own mind.



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Yoga – Our Priceless Insurance

Samaria Hotel, Hania, Crete, 24 April 1984

Many people misunderstand yoga to be a religion, therefore it is important that we explain to everybody what yoga is. I think that in the western world, yoga was not properly introduced and not explained thoroughly. Often, when I visited different countries, many people and denominations were a bit scared about what I was saying. Therefore, I will try to explain to you that yoga is not a religion, but a science like any other science.

For over fifty years scientists in America, Europe, India, Russia, Poland and Japan have been scientifically studying yoga because yoga claims that it can cure many diseases. Yoga claims that it can cure mental sicknesses and help you develop your mental powers. First of all, scientists scoffed at these claims. How is it possible that yoga practices can cure illness? How can yoga cure mental and emotional sickness? Therefore, the scientists wanted to do some research work.

For many centuries the swamis, the teachers from India, have been coming to the West. One of the outstanding gurus went to America in the last century. He inspired many great scientists to work on yoga. Of course, in my brief speech, I may not be able to tell you what work has been done on yoga by the scientists, but I can tell you that in the last fifty years, the volume of scientific research on

yoga is beyond your imagination. Even the scientists of Soviet Russia have engaged themselves in scientific studies on yoga. Therefore, nobody should have any doubt about yoga being a science.

Yoga in outer space

On 3rd April this year, a yoga teacher was sent into orbit with yoga lessons. From this you can understand that yoga is definitely not a religion. If yoga were a religion, then a yoga teacher could not have gone into space. I do not think that he went into space to talk about religion, Russia would be the last country to accept it. The purpose was to find out how yoga influences the difficulties which these astronauts face in weightless space.

Astronauts have been facing a lot of physical and emotional problems when they orbit in space. These physiological, emotional and mental problems start before they go into orbit. Due to weightlessness, they have a lot of physical and mental problems, like loss of hunger and then gradual deterioration of the muscular systems in the body and deeper fears in the mind. Therefore, they wanted to find out how yoga could help these conditions.

One of the greatest problems in space is monotony. If you are there for three months you will get bored. If you have to stay in space for about a year, you can imagine how monotonous that would be because you don't have nightclubs there, no beaches, no recreation, no beautiful markets and this monotony, this boredom, causes sickness. This sickness is nervous sickness, that is to say, it hits your nervous system.

In yoga they talk about samadhi. You may have heard about it from time to time. Samadhi means forgetting yourself. Samadhi means disassociating your mind from external objects. It is a type of mental hibernation. Frogs hibernate; that is physical hibernation. In yoga you can hibernate mentally for ten days, three months, six years or for any length of time. If you hibernate, you close your eyes

and open your eyes after ten years, and you, the astronaut, will find yourself orbiting around Saturn. Well, this is one glimpse of the practical application of yoga in the field of science.

Yoga in sport

Apart from this, yoga can be applied in various areas of life. Many times people misunderstand yoga to be only spiritual. I want to tell you that yoga is not only spiritual, but a complete science. In America, when they prepare their team for the Olympics, they teach them yoga. They teach them concentration and what they teach them is very interesting for you to know. They tell their sportsmen to concentrate on a yantra, on a symbol, on a triangle in the forehead and in the centre of the triangle they ask them to concentrate on a dot or bindu. When the concentration on the point becomes perfect, you attain perfection in your art.

This year, in the winter Olympics, there was a beautiful idea. When the Americans were performing their act, they had to ski and go to one point, take a rifle and shoot at five targets, then go further, do it again, and go further and do it again. They had to shoot at five targets and be at the other end as quickly as possible. Now the practice which they were taught was yogic concentration. In order to shoot those five targets exactly, they were asked to concentrate on the triangle and the point in the centre so that they could get it perfect. This is just another glimpse of how yoga is a science which is related with our life here.

America: research into brainwave patterns

Much other research has been conducted in America, Poland, Russia, as well as in Japan. American scientists say that, when you practise yoga, you can alter the brainwaves. This is very important because if you can alter the brainwaves, you can alter the pressure on the heart and the nervous system. You know that in the brain we have various types of waves. According to the level of stress, these

brainwaves differ from time to time. While we are thinking, dreaming, sleeping, or working the brainwaves are different.

If you can change or alter the waves of your brain through your willpower, you can relax whenever you like. You know many people cannot sleep. They want to sleep, but they can't sleep. Then they take sleeping pills. Sleeping pills can help you for a day, a week, a month, but they cannot teach you how to alter the brainwaves. They can interfere with your nervous system, that is all.

In yoga we teach how to manipulate your brainwaves. If you can alter your brainwaves and produce delta waves, immediately you can sleep. Or if you can produce alpha waves, you can relax. The question is, how to produce alpha waves? How to produce delta waves? By sleeping pills? Do you believe it? No, scientists do not believe it. Scientists never believe that drugs can alter the brainwaves. This is the main subject matter of yoga. Many experiments were done and are being done in America on the effect of yoga on brainwave patterns.

Hippies and mantra

In 1968 I went to San Francisco. At that time the hippies, the 'flower children', were growing. I call it the 'Hippie Age' not 'Nuclear Age'. When they heard that a swami, guru or teacher had come, they came to see me, and some of them were equipped with earphones. I asked them what the earphones were. They called it an Aquarius earphone.

This earphone was producing a sound, *Om . . . Om . . . Om . . . Om . . .* all the time. I asked, "Why do you do all this?" They said that by this sound they were able to control their brainwaves. The important point is: a sound has a definite effect on the brainwave pattern and when the sound is produced rhythmically for a period of time it creates an effect on the brain cycles.

Not only a few hundred, but a few thousand studies have been done on the effect of sound on the physical body and the conclusions are these. When you produce a sound,

when you practise a mantra, it alters the brainwaves. It decreases the necessity of oxygen consumption. It maintains a steady blood pressure. It relaxes the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems and has an all-round beneficial effect on the bio-chemical structure of the body. I have myself found that when you are practising the mantra, when you are practising one particular sound, at that time, the behaviour of the heart is very cordial and very healthy. This is a very short glimpse of the experiments done in the United States.

Poland: research on the headstand

In Poland they have worked on the yoga postures. These yoga postures, which look like exercises, are not exercises. You cannot compare yoga postures or yoga asanas with exercises. It has been found that the yoga postures and exercises have two different effects on the body. Polish scientists and doctors have done research on postures and pranayama, but their research into the headstand pose is outstanding.

The headstand pose is called *sirshasana*. This yoga posture is a most important one for the man of today because he thinks all the time, and his brain and mind are over-exercised. At the same time, the brain suffers from anaemia because we think all the time. The consumption of oxygen is very great and normally the body cannot produce it. It is like feeding an elephant with a few kilograms of rice or something like that.

With each and every thought, you are consuming something in the body. Have you ever seen a tape recorder run by batteries? When the tape recorder is running it is consuming the batteries and, if you keep on running the tape recorder for forty-eight hours, the battery will go flat. Exactly the same thing happens to us. Many times our brain goes flat.

According to the bulk of thinking, you must be able to replenish the energy in the brain. In yoga, there are two

methods of supplying energy to the brain and conserving the energy. By meditation, concentration and samadhi, you conserve energy, just as you conserve your battery in the tape recorder for whenever you need it. Whenever you need it, put the tape recorder on; when you don't need it, put it off. Do you know how to put the brain off and put it on? No, you don't know.

There is only one science in the world which teaches you how to switch on and switch off the brain, and that is yoga. In the night when you go to sleep you forget to switch off, every night. You are sleeping, your body is sleeping, but your tape recorder is on. Your brain is working. It is consuming energy. It is consuming oxygen. It is pressurizing the heart. It is creating stress on the nervous system, because you do not know how to switch off the brain when you do not need it.

This is what we teach in yoga – the direct method to switch off and the indirect method to switch off. One thing is, switch off the brain; secondly, replenish the energy for the functioning of the brain. Scientists in Poland have found that in the headstand pose you supply rich blood to the brain and so damage to the brain is repaired. When you are practising the headstand pose, the consumption of oxygen is minimal. That means that by practising the headstand pose, you are saving oxygen which is necessary fuel for the body. We call it 'fuel economy', spending less and less energy. With the headstand pose it has also been found that the respiration rate comes down.

In all the yoga practices it has been found that the respiration is absolutely under control. Another important thing they have found is that there are three types of tensions: muscular tensions which are related to the physical body, mental tensions and emotional tensions. These tensions are different from each other, but are mostly interrelated. When you practise yoga postures, the physical and muscular tensions come down and this has been measured by scientific apparatus. The serpent posture,

bhujangasana, and many other yoga postures bring the physical tensions down. This and much more work has been done by the scientists and doctors in Poland.

Russia: research in telepathy

Let us go to the Soviet Union. Have they done anything on yoga? What have they done? Of course, whatever Russians do, they don't talk very much about it, but at the same time, two documents have been taken out of the Soviet Union in the last twenty years. These two documents were published on the international market. The name of the first document is *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain*. The name of the second of these documents is *Possibility of the Improbable*, which means even this can happen.

These two documents give details about the scientific research done in the Soviet Union on the human mind and its potential. When the mind is distracted, it is weak. When you think so many things at one time, it is weak. When your mind is dissipated it is weak, but when you are able to concentrate the energies of the mind through the practices of yoga, then the mind becomes very powerful.

The mind is a type of energy. It is not a bundle of habits. The mind is not a psychological stuff. Mind is not good, not bad. Like electrical energy, the mind is also energy. You have heard about radio energy, electromagnetic energy, sound, solar, and wind energy. Like that there is mind energy. A thought which comes in your mind, imagination which comes in your mind, is a form of that energy. Like this, light is a form of energy. A heater is a form of energy, an air-conditioner is a form of energy. There are many manifestations of energy as you know. How can you think? It is because of that energy and in most people this mental energy is in a dissipated condition.

This dissipated energy of mind should be concentrated. If you can concentrate your mind, if you can concentrate your awareness, you can transmit the energy through space. A thought is like a wave, it has a frequency and velocity.

Every thought has frequency. You understand frequency? Short-wave frequency, medium-wave, and long-wave. Now, the rule is, the lower the velocity, the greater the frequency, the greater the velocity, the lower the frequency. Our minds have velocity and no frequency, but if you can stop the mind there will be no velocity, but there will be frequency.

They experimented on this in the Soviet Union. They selected two subjects; one subject was the transmitter and the other was the receiver. One was transmitting a thought and the other was receiving it. At first it was done at a distance of one metre. As and when they succeeded, the distance was increased. Can you believe the last distance was 1,600 miles? That is to say, one man was able to transmit his thought for 1,600 miles and the other was able to receive his thought at a distance of 1,600 miles. After this experiment was finished, both of them were enclosed in Faraday cages and put into the ocean. In a Faraday cage, neither electromagnetic waves, nor radio waves, no waves could penetrate, but thought waves could. You can increase the frequencies of your mental waves and they know no barrier.

This science of the mind in yoga is known as raja yoga. The science of raja yoga tells us that the mind is the most powerful tool in the hands of a person. If you can discipline your mental waves or control them, then you are master of your own mind. He who is a master of his own mind is a yogi or a swami. The eminent psychologist, Dr Carl Jung, has also spoken about the importance of yoga in disciplining one's mind and emotions.

Japan: research into energy

Now, I am going to tell you about a very important experiment conducted in Japan. In Japan I have a very good friend, Dr Hiroshi Motoyama. He has a very important association there and I am a member and adviser of that association. I will tell you about an experiment. Please listen with great care.

In a small room, a girl is sitting in meditation. She is concentrating at the bottom of the spine between the

excretory and urinary passages. This particular centre which I am talking about is considered to be a very important centre, the seat of a dormant energy force within us. Is it not funny that the portion which is considered to be impure should be the seat of energy? People do not want to think about it, people do not want to talk about it, but that is the place where the primordial energy is dormant. The girl was concentrating on that point.

Scientists had fixed electrodes on different parts of her body. In the next room electroencephalogram, electrocardiogram, mind-mirror, everything was recording what was happening to her and in that absolutely dark room, one video camera was fixed on her in a slanting way. The camera was focused on the lower part of her body between the navel and the urinary organ.

She was meditating for half an hour in the lotus posture and concentrating on that lower centre. Her breath was becoming more and more refined, the respiration rate was going down. The heart was idle or in a state of inertia, the brainwaves almost slowed to alpha, in between alpha and delta. After half an hour her meditation was over and she came out of the room.

I saw that film which was focused on the lower part of her body during that half an hour. For the first twelve minutes there was nothing. It was just total darkness because there was no light in the room. It was a perfectly insulated room. There were no electrical charges in the room and the whole room was heavily insulated by lead. After twelve minutes suddenly a very tiny spark of light began to shine like a star. It had no uniform shape. It looked like a glow worm. The light was of a mercury type. Sometimes the tiny light began to swell, became larger. Sometimes it used to move straight, a little bit upward and then again come down. Then it used to go to the left or right and come back. It was behaving very erratically. This kind of game by that little spark of light continued for eight minutes and finally it disappeared. It could not go very high. Perhaps it could only rise up to the second plexus.

In your spine you have six plexus', six psychic centres. The first centre is in the perineum, second is in the sacral area, third is in the solar plexus, fourth is in the cardiac plexus, fifth in the cervical plexus and the sixth is on the top of the spine. This particular spark of light was not able to go beyond the second centre.

Dr Hiroshi Motoyama asked me what the light was. The room was lead insulated. There was no electricity in the room, only a camera was focused. Was it the energy of the mind? Was it the concentrated form of her mind? Or was it some energy which she was able to explode from her lower centre? All these questions are answered in yoga.

Yoga – available to all

In my opinion, I think the yogic practices which we do are a type of insurance. You know what insurance is? Periodically you pay some premium though you don't need to do that every day. In the same way, if you practise yoga every day, you are paying a premium and this premium helps you whenever you need it. Therefore today, in the last part of the twentieth century, yoga has become the most popular science throughout the world. Now, when yoga has gone into space, you will have to understand that it has not gone there as a religion. It has gone there in order to help.

20

The Purpose of Yoga, Meditation, Pranayama, Mantra, Yantra

Town Lecture Hall, Rethimno, Crete, 25 April 1984

You know that yoga has become very important in the last few years. Throughout the world, thinkers and scientists have been studying the practical utility of yoga in day-to-day life. People throughout the world want to know what exactly yoga is. They also want to know whether yoga can help them in their life. In fact, yoga is a very old science which has been forgotten by people.

The main purpose of yoga is to enlighten the individual about his inner nature. Man is limited by his mind and body. Because of these limitations he is not able to understand the real truth. Therefore sometimes he feels greatly frustrated about his own existence. He finds that the life which he is leading is not complete. He tries to understand the purpose of life and he tries to understand the philosophy of life.

The philosophy of yoga helps everyone to understand the truth about his own nature, but it is important that, before we try to understand the philosophy of life, our own minds and our own personalities must be in total harmony. If we analyze our own selves, we will find that our minds are not stable or concentrated; the philosophy, the idea and the doctrine we have is not complete. Therefore the practice of yoga is so important for everybody to realize their own self.

Dhyana yoga: meditation

There are various forms of yoga, but out of all those forms I am going to tell you about the path of meditation which is considered to be a most important form of yoga. Meditation is known as dhyana yoga. When the mind becomes one-pointed we achieve meditation. It is not easy to concentrate the mind. The various realms of mind-the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the unconscious mind-all three have to be harmonized.

One of the most important and greatest achievements of human life is meditation, but when you close your eyes you are not able to get the proper direction because the waves of the mind are so turbulent, so restless. The science which teaches meditation is known as raja yoga. It is a classical system which teaches us various techniques to help develop deep and profound meditation. Now, let us make it very clear that by suppressing the mind you cannot achieve meditation. If you force your mind, even then you cannot achieve meditation. However, there are ways, methods and techniques which automatically give you the experience of meditation.

Pratyahara: separation from perceptions

The mind functions on three levels. These three levels of mind are known in modern psychology as conscious, subconscious and unconscious. In yoga philosophy they are known as the gross mind, the astral mind and the causal mind. Through these three levels of mind you have objective and sensorial experiences.

There is a relationship, there is an link between the mind, the object and the senses. The mind experiences an object via the senses. Tasting, hearing, touching, seeing, all these experiences which you get through the senses are cognized by the mind. This process of cognition of objects is to be stopped in meditation. When you are very deep in meditation, then you don't hear external sounds and you do not have any experiences of the senses, because the connection between the mind and the object is separated.

Therefore, the first step to meditation is to separate the mind from the senses. If you are not able to separate the mind from the senses, meditation cannot take place. There are many ways of achieving this. In our times, many people try drugs and with their help they are able to separate the mind from the senses. In yoga there are techniques by which you can separate your mind from the senses. One of the most powerful is the technique of pranayama.

Pranayama: balancing energy

What is pranayama? Pranayama is a technique of breathing by which the brain is influenced. You should know that the brain has two hemispheres. These two hemispheres of the brain are connected with the two nostrils. The breath which you inhale through the left nostril influences the right hemisphere. Similarly, when you breathe through the right nostril, it influences the left hemisphere. The two hemispheres of the brain and the two breathing systems are related to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. When you practise pranayama you are creating an influence, an impression, on the two hemispheres of the brain, thereby you are creating balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. When there is harmony in the nervous system and harmony in the brain, the mind separates itself from the senses.

The science of pranayama is a very important science and I will tell you a little more about it. I must make it very clear to you that pranayama does not give you meditation directly, but it helps you to separate the mind from the process of cognition and perception.

In the practice of pranayama, first of all you have to assume a steady posture. The spine has to be upright and straight, and the eyes should remain closed. The inner gaze must be fixed either on the tip of the nose or at the mid-eyebrow centre.

These pranayamas are of various types, some for people who have a very restless mind and others for people who

have a calm and quiet mind. There is a pranayama known as bhastrika which is practised very rapidly. You go on breathing very fast, after ten minutes you close your eyes and then you start practising meditation. This pranayama is for people who have an active, restless mind. There are different types of people. Some people are naturally introverted and some people are always extrovert. Therefore, according to this difference in the quality of the person, the pranayama has to be understood. The people who are very restless, their mind does not stay at one point even for one second. If they are trying to concentrate on one point, after some seconds they find that their mind is thinking of something else and they didn't know it. It is for these people that this bhastrika pranayama is very important and very effective.

For other people there is a very important pranayama. You first breathe in through the left nostril, then stop your breath for some time, then breathe out through the right nostril and again stop the breath, breathe in through the right nostril, out through the left and repeat it. This is one full round. You should practise five rounds before meditation. However, breathing in, breathing out and retaining the breath is not that easy. There is a system, a discipline, a method of breathing in and breathing out. Please remember that pranayama is not a breathing exercise. Inhalation and exhalation must have a ratio of one to two. If you are breathing in for five seconds you should breathe out for ten seconds. The ratio between inhalation, retention and exhalation has to be fixed properly, only then will it affect the brain. How to breathe in and what ratio you need to maintain should be learnt from your teacher personally.

Bandhas: increasing the voltage

When you retain the breath, you have to do something more. You have to create a pressure at three points in the body. The pressure is intended to create a force, what you call a centrifugal force. I hope you know what centripetal and centrifugal force is. This force has to be created by

maintaining pressure in three different areas of the body at the time when you are holding the breath. You must contract your throat, the anus and abdominal muscles, and these three contractions should be practised when you are holding the breath. By maintaining contraction in these three different areas, you try to work upon what you call the autonomic nervous system.

When the autonomic nervous system is awakened, when the autonomic nervous system becomes active, then both the nostrils flow equally. You must have noticed that sometimes the right one flows and sometimes the left one flows. That is due to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems which are controlled by the solar and lunar cycles.

Awakening the autonomic nervous system

When you practise this pranayama and contract the three different areas in the body, the autonomous nervous system becomes active. Therefore, those who want to meditate must know, must realize, the right time for meditation. When both nostrils are flowing equally, go ahead.

The right nostril corresponds with the life force. The left nostril represents and corresponds with the mental force. When your left nostril is flowing, if you meditate you will have a lot of visions, psychic visions, forms, imaginations, but no meditation. If you try to meditate when your right nostril is flowing, you won't be able to meditate as your mind will be very active. Therefore, before you start practising meditation, you must awaken the autonomic nervous system, it is absolutely a requisite. There are many ways of doing this, but I am not going to tell you all that during this brief lecture.

Supports for meditation

The next point. If you are ready for meditation, that is, both nostrils are flowing equally, what should you do next? Now you need a basis for meditation because the mind needs a base. The mind needs a support. Without that base,

without the support, the mind cannot concentrate on an abstract idea.

According to yoga there are various bases or supports for meditation. For example, you can meditate on the mid-eyebrow centre. You can concentrate on the tip of the nose, the navel centre, the heart centre, the centre of the brain, the back side of the brain or at the bottom of the spine. You can concentrate on the natural and spontaneous breath. You can concentrate on an external object like a lamp. It is not necessary for me to tell you how many objects there are on which you can meditate, but to sum up, there are two important methods: number one, the sound and number two, the form.

The sound is known as mantra or name, that is one way. Then comes the form of an object. A flower has a form. A star, sun or moon has a form. So, name and form or sound and form are two important methods with which you can start concentration. You can use both or one of them, it doesn't matter. Some people prefer to meditate only on sound, but in my opinion you should use both.

Mantra: the sound

Sound is thought to be a very important tool for success in meditation. Sound means your inner sound. Everyone has a sound; I have a sound – it is my nucleus. That is my personality. You have a sound and this sound is the basis or nucleus of your consciousness. If you can discover a sound, if you can discover 'your' sound, meditation can take place immediately. This sound is repeated mentally and when you repeat this sound mentally, then your mind attains a high frequency.

Sound has colour and sound has its own form, although not the form which you write in letters in Greek and Roman script. Every sound you produce has a form, but you can't see that form. Suppose you produce a sound 'ka'. In Roman you will write 'ka'. You can write it in Latin, you can write it in Greek, but those are alphabets. They are not the forms of

sound. The sound 'ka' has a form. What is that form? Is that the form of a lotus, a flower, an animal or an object?

Many scientists and great wise men say that every sound has a particular form of animal, river and flower. Some of these sounds have human forms. Some sounds have half human and half animal forms. The upper part is a human being and the lower part is a fish, lion or tiger. You have seen many symbols. That is the form of the sound. When you are producing your sound it explodes certain visions in your mind.

Inner vision

You know what vision is? Vision means seeing inside. This is also vision; I am seeing you and you are seeing me, but it is external. When you close your eyes and you see, that is called vision. This vision is not imagination, not fantasy, not hallucination. What you see within you, what I call vision, is your own consciousness evolving. Therefore, for our spiritual evolution, it is important that we must explode and we must experience these visions. Many wise men, painters, poets and singers have visions and these visions are not untrue. Many times we have visions and we go to psychologists and they think that it is a mental problem. It is not a mental problem. When you meditate and when you concentrate, when you practise a mantra, the inner forms come from inside your unconscious. Sometimes these visions come from the subconscious mind and sometimes they come from your unconscious and therefore, when you are practising your sound or mantra, you are trying to accelerate the pace of your evolution.

Yantra: the form

There is another important method of influencing the mind. That is called concentration on yantra. A yantra is geometrical in formation. I don't know how many of you will have seen a yantra. There are many, many thousands of yantras and these yantras are drawn in a geometrical shape.

They are in the form of a flower, sunflower, lotus flower, triangle, hexagon, circle and so on. They are known as yantras and these yantras are objects of concentration.

When you concentrate on yantras they influence your karma. Your karma means the totality of your experience and the totality of your existence. When you practise concentration on any yantra it develops a fine picture within your mind. Understand that, through the practice of meditation, you are going within yourself. That means from body you go to the mind. From the mind you go to the emotions and from the emotions you go to the ego. From the ego you go to the super ego and from the super ego you go deep into yourself.

Search for the self

When I say your self I don't mean this body because this body is not my self. This mind is not my self. Emotion is not my self. Ego or even the super-ego is not my self. I am different from all these. I am a seer of all these. I see the body; I am not the body. I know the mind; I am not the mind. Likewise, you go to your self and the purpose of yoga is to help everybody to realize their own self. Wise people say that those who have known themselves; those who have realized their self, those who have known their self are the people who have known everything.

Do you remember what Socrates said? He said, "Know thyself." Did he want you to know the body? If Socrates wanted you to know the body then there would be nothing in it because everybody says it. When he said, "Know thyself", he meant that self, not the body, not the mind, not the emotions, not the ego, not even the super-ego, but beyond this.

The self which I am, what is its form? Is it like an animal or like an angel? Is it a voice, a sort of painting, a kind of music, like a fire flame or fire sparks? Is it something like a divine being with four hands or six hands? What is the nature of my self? It is definite by all experiments, it is definite by all knowledge and evidence, that this body is not my self.

If this body was the self then it was not necessary for Socrates to say, “Know thyself,” because everybody knows it. When he said, “Know thyself,” he meant that nobody knows it and nobody knew it. Therefore, he was sacrificed because unwise people do not understand what the self is. For an Epicurean, for a hedonist, the body is ultimate. For a sensualist, matter is ultimate, but not for a yogi or for a wise man.

Today, scientists and physicists don’t believe that matter is ultimate. This body is matter, you understand, it is finite, it will die. It is not ultimate. Therefore, beyond matter is energy, beyond energy is consciousness? No, it is not true. Energy is the finer form of matter. Matter can be totally transformed into energy. There is no such thing as matter, matter is the gross form of energy. Therefore, through the practices of yoga, you should try to transcend the body. Then through the practices of yoga and meditation you should try to transcend the body idea, mind idea and ego consciousness, and then you can experience your self in the form of something. I don’t know. Nobody can tell you what the nature of the self is. The atman can be known by you. If I have known it, I can’t tell you. It cannot be explained. It can’t be exposed, but it can be experienced by you.

When your mind is clouded, when your mind is clumsy, when you are in utter confusion, then the answer will be wrong, but when your mind is cleared and purified by meditation, then you can see your real face in the clean mirror. When the mind is broken, the knowledge is mutilated. True knowledge depends upon purity of mind.

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Interview

Hotel Doma, Hania, Crete, 25 April 1984

What is yoga?

Yoga is a practical system of disciplining and correcting the errors in the body and mind. When these errors are corrected, yoga becomes a way to understand oneself. Yoga has a philosophy of course and this philosophy presupposes that there is consciousness and matter in the whole universe. Matter is again divided into two: one division is matter or substance and the other is energy. If there is an imbalance between matter and consciousness, then there is imbalance in the body and mind. Therefore, there are four important forms of yoga, each connected with one part of the human personality. Bhakti yoga is connected with human emotions, raja yoga with the human mind, jnana yoga with the human intellect and karma yoga with the human attachments.

Now, all the problems that we face arise from our attachments, our emotions. Our mind, intellect and personality must be corrected first. Thereby you can experience a happier life, but there are some people who want more than happiness. These people are only a few. For these people there are higher forms of yoga. For those who want only happiness, there are these four forms of yoga.

If you want a good mind, a good body, good emotions and good intellect then this is the lower yoga. If you want

to go higher and deeper, then for you there are the higher forms of yoga, known as kundalini yoga and kriya yoga. By practising those yogas you can go deep into meditation, you can transcend the body idea, the mind idea and all ideas. Therefore, yoga has a definite role to fulfil. For most people yoga is a way to happiness through discipline, not erratic or sensual happiness, and for a few people it means knowledge of higher reality, but in yoga everything is practical. We do not insist so much on philosophy, theory and doctrine. I think that yoga, in this sense, is purely individualistic.

I do not know much about politics, economics and socialism because I have lived as a swami from the age of nineteen and I am completely out of touch. I think that yoga is a purely individual discipline, but one thing is certain about yoga. When you are fixed in yoga then your needs are minimized. This means you can survive with the minimum.

Is there a particular form of breathing for high blood pressure?

There are many forms of breathing and every form is important for the individual according to his particularities. Some forms of breathing are good for low blood pressure and some are good for high blood pressure. Some breathing, or pranayama is good for the heart, some for lungs, some for concentration of mind or controlling the mind. So there are about eight forms of breathing and these are all different to suit individual needs.

Every pranayama has different rules. Some pranayamas are abdominal, some are diaphragmatic and some have nothing to do with this. For high blood pressure there are four types of pranayama: sheetali, sheetkari, ujjayi and bhramari. It is very necessary to adjust the blood pressure, because when we sit for meditation, if the blood pressure is high or low, it will influence our experience.

How can we know the self?

The self has to be known step by step, not all at once. If you want to experience the self, the first thing you must know is how to shut the mind for some time. You should be able to see within yourself, within the mind.

What are psychic experiences?

They are directions from higher nature. They come from your higher mind and whenever they come from your higher mind, you must follow them. You should not expect them, you should not wish for them. You should just accept them when they come – that's all.

If you want to develop then you should practise tantric meditation. Tantric meditation means meditation on a yantra, the flame of a candle or meditating on a crystal ball; then you will know more.

How can we know when meditation has been successful?

When concentration becomes successful you begin to see visions, that is, colours or forms or anything internally. This is the first symptom of growing concentration. The best point of concentration is the eyebrow centre, but many people find it difficult to concentrate on this point so they should first concentrate on the flame of a candle placed in front of them, then close the eyes and concentrate on the reflected image. This is the practice of *trataka*. If you want to concentrate on the eyebrow centre directly you might experience a little strain.

How can we deal with stress?

In order to cope with anxiety and stress one has to develop the strength of the nervous system. This is one way. However, sometimes the causes of anxiety and stress not as serious as we think because what causes you anxiety may not cause me as much anxiety. Therefore, the second method is to try to understand the exact level of anxiety, not the imaginary and exaggerated level. The third method

is to try and relax immediately when anxiety enters the mind.

In order to improve the strength of the nervous system we should practise hatha yoga. To know the exact level of anxiety we should practise a little bit of concentration, and to relax temporarily, then and there, we should learn the practice of yoga nidra.

How can we recognize our guru?

It is necessary that one should do some yoga practices even without a guru. Practise with some teacher for a few months or a year. After learning some practices from someone who is not necessarily your guru, you will have a practical and personal understanding because yoga purifies the mind and intellect. Then, when you meet your guru you will recognize him at once.

At this moment you are spiritually blind. Even if your guru were standing in front of you, you couldn't see him, just like a blind man cannot see the sun, the fire or the flower. In order to see the sun, fire or flower or anything, you have to open your eyes. In the same way a seeker is a blind person, ignorant. If he does a few practices without a guru, he opens his eyes. At that time, if a guru comes to him he will recognize him at once.

According to my personal experience, when you are in front of your guru and your eyes are open, you don't even think about it, you don't even doubt. There is no question of whether or not he is your guru. The mind becomes quiet. You are as if hypnotized, as if your mind is under control. Therefore, in order to find a guru you must do some sadhana with a teacher, go to satsang and hear the discourses, read the books and meet good people, then you will be ready.

Many swamis coming to the West talk about God. Why is it that you do not?

I only teach yoga. I don't teach a religion, therefore I don't talk about God or great souls. I don't go that far. I only teach

that to those who are very close to me. I don't teach religion to the public, only yoga. I stop there. I don't talk about God to them. If you were very, very close to me, maybe then I could talk about God, otherwise I keep quiet because religion is your business, not mine.

Many people say to me that all the swamis who come to the West talk about God and the soul, but I only talk about yoga, so I have to give an explanation. You see, my disciples come from various religions. Some of them are atheists or communists and some are Muslims, therefore it is necessary that I do not offend them because they are all my disciples. One may believe in Jehovah, another in Rama, Krishna or Christ. It's okay, let them do it. That is their way, but I think that if the foundation is not strong then the superstructure will fall.

What is an aura?

Around the body there is body magnetism. It is called an aura. It depends on one's thoughts and emotions, and changes in most people from time to time. Now you are happy, now you are unhappy, now you are depressed, now you are jubilant, accordingly the aura changes from time to time. Sometimes it is large, sometimes it is small.

Everybody has an aura and it becomes more prominent in those who practise meditation. Some call it an aura, others magnetism and others the light of the spirit. They have various names for it. When you concentrate on a person you can see their aura. You can see anyone's aura, it doesn't take long. If you concentrate on someone for fifteen minutes you can get it. It is not a very difficult thing to do and it doesn't help you very much because the aura changes. In most people the aura changes, so naturally you do not know exactly what their personality is. Sometimes, if you are having spiritual thoughts your aura is different, but in the afternoon you may be depressed and the aura will change again.

Every object has an aura or outline not only human beings. A stone, a mineral, a leaf, a goat, a buffalo, a cow, a horse or a pig, every object has an aura. It is a field, just

like you have electromagnetic fields, likewise every object has a field and that field can be increased. Suppose there is a stone around which there is a field. If you concentrate on that stone, the field will increase. A picture or a statue also has an aura around it.

In yoga we call this the subtle body. You see the physical body, but besides this there are many bodies: the pranic body, the mental body, the psychic body, the emotional body and the unconscious body. There are ten bodies enshrined in this physical body and they are known as fields. You can see this physical body, but not the other nine, because they are in the form of vibrations and these vibrations are all different from each other. When you talk about the aura you are using a very general term. You have seen pictures of great saints; they have a golden aura around them which represents illumination. So, there are various types of aura which everybody has and can know.

Your aura may be touching the aura of someone else. You will feel that physically you are separate, but your auras will be touching. You can increase or decrease the aura, therefore it is said that when you shut your mind, when you close your mind during meditation and think only of one thing, not two things, then the aura, the pranic or spiritual aura is increased. It becomes huge. Whereas when you are not meditating, but your mind is restless and excited, then the aura shrinks and becomes small. It is not imagination, it is real. It is an experience which can come to you when your mind is one-pointed for some time.

Sometimes an object can develop an inner experience for you, but not every object. For everyone there is one object called a symbol. When you concentrate on that object you get an experience immediately for a short time. Everybody has a different symbol. If one person concentrates on light they may not get any experience, but you may get it. In order to develop an experience you need an exact symbol which you must be drawn to. This experience comes from the unconscious mind, deep inside.

You should have more and more experiences. These experiences may not have any meaning, but in the course of time they will help you spiritually. Please remember that no experience is imaginary, every experience comes from inside. There is no such thing as imagination; it is real in the sense that it is coming from you. Only you can have this experience, no one else, and when you are concentrating on your symbol you will get many experiences; it can be anything. Sometimes it is pleasant, sometimes it is unpleasant, both of these feelings are all right.

You should not try to interpret or give a meaning to these experiences because they come from very, very far off. You see, in spiritual life there are many questions that come into the mind and possibly you can't get an answer intellectually. Nor will I give you the true answer because if I give you the correct answer you will not understand it, so I have to answer according to your reach of mind. If a child of three asks me about the moon, what do I tell him? I will not tell him that the moon is a planet and that there is no oxygen there for he would not understand that. I will explain according to his understanding.

You have to understand that true knowledge cannot be given; you must realize it for yourself. You have to start practising something, that is important. Don't practise much, just a little. Not two or three hours, just ten minutes or fifteen minutes, that's all. Start your practice from grass-roots level: first hatha yoga, then raja yoga, then kriya yoga, then kundalini yoga. Like that, step by step.

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Experiencing the Self

Atlantis Hotel, Iraklio, Crete, 26 April 1984

There was a wise man in Greece, many hundred years ago, who used to tell his fellow men that they should know their own self. His famous dictum was, “Know thyself.” He created a great revolution in thought and philosophy in this country. However even before that, in India, there existed a philosophy and a doctrine saying the same thing.

Long before Socrates was born there was a system, a philosophy and discipline known as yoga. Religious people everywhere believe in one reality, but the philosophy of yoga believes in two realities and is therefore known as a dualistic philosophy, not a monistic philosophy. The philosophy of yoga says that consciousness and nature are the two eternal realities. A combination and interaction between consciousness and matter produces what we call creation. Even in each and every particle of matter, in each and every object, in each and everything that you see, there is a combination of consciousness and matter.

Transcendental experience

When matter becomes gross then we become gross because creation is a process of manifestation of matter. Each and everybody, each and every individual, must try to return from matter, from nature, to consciousness. We know

matter, but we don't know the self. We talk about God, but we don't know. We talk about higher transcendental things, but we don't know. Talking about transcendental matter is one thing, understanding, experiencing and knowing transcendental matters is a completely different thing. When we know matter we know creation, but what about the thing within us?

We know only those things which are visible and which are gross, but do you believe or do you think, that what you see is everything? Is there nothing beyond this gross and visible matter? Is the body ultimate? Is the body your definition? Are you the body or something different from the body? Are you the mind or something different from the mind? Are you the senses and emotions or are you the seer of those? If you are the body, then Socrates was a fool. If you are the body, the mind and the senses and nothing beyond this, then not only Socrates, but all the great sages and wise men were fools, but I think we are not wiser than they were.

Yoga is an attempt, yoga is an effort to search for the reality behind the appearance. There are two distinct events in creation. One is called reality and the other is called appearance. This body is appearance. Your external form is an appearance. Matter is an appearance, but what is reality? This reality is something which one has to know. This reality is not an intellectual philosophy. This reality is not what is written in the books. This reality is a matter of your personal experience and therefore yoga tries to serve this reality. In order to experience and understand this reality you will have to go into yourself.

When you go out you see creation. When you go out you experience the sense objects, you see the forms, you hear the sounds. Like this you have many external experiences, you see what we call diversity. In outer experience there is no experience of unity. If one is trying to experience unity in this external world one will not succeed and this is precisely the reason why everybody is unhappy.

The search for happiness

We are unhappy, not because we have no money, not because somebody is dead in our family, not because something has gone wrong. We are unhappy because we are searching for happiness in diversity. We are unhappy because we are searching for happiness when it is not there. Now try to think, try to think quietly, try to think of one thing quietly within your mind. In your everyday life you are searching for happiness and where are you searching for happiness? You search for happiness from external objects. You expect happiness from your children, from your friends, from your family, but do you get it? No. Maybe you get it for some time or maybe you get not happiness, but unhappiness. Why is it like this?

Do you think that all the things of this world are real? No, we have made a fundamental error. We have not tried to understand who experiences happiness and who experiences unhappiness. You experience happiness, you experience unhappiness, not from the object, but from the mind. If your mind is sick then no object can give you happiness. If you are abnormal mentally, if you are sick mentally, nothing in this world can give you happiness. Therefore the fundamental philosophy of happiness is a healthy mind.

This is the basic concept of yoga. If you have a healthy body then you can experience happiness from food and from everything. If you have healthy, normal emotions and a balanced mind you can experience happiness and love from everybody. If your emotions are imbalanced, if you are emotionally down and broken, then your beautiful children, your good wife, your good husband, your good business – nothing can give you happiness. Please understand.

The same thing can be said about the mind. Mind is full of tensions. This body is full of tensions. With a tense body, with a tense mind, with tense emotions, you are trying to experience happiness, and you don't get it, or even if you do get it, it is only for a short time. You experience happiness for a short time, then happiness finishes, dies. With a tense

body and tense emotions you pray, but nothing happens. When your body, mind and emotions are tense, your love is confused. Therefore you try to escape. You try to escape from these tensions, but then the problem is how to make the mind healthy. Where is the way and which is the way?

No religion in the world has shown the way to a healthy mind, healthy body and healthy emotions. For thousands of years only one philosophy has helped mankind and that philosophy is yoga. What is yoga? What does yoga do to us and, if I practise yoga, what do I get? The answer is self-evident – a healthy body without tension, a peaceful mind without tension and pure emotion without tension. Therefore, I am talking to you about yoga.

Branches of yoga

Yoga is a general term, just as you say ‘education’. What is education? Geometry, algebra, physics, history, geography, chemistry, biology, economics, commerce – all these are education. In the same way, there are many branches and faculties in yoga. One type of yoga takes care of the body, purifies the body and disciplines the body. Another type of yoga takes care of the mind, purifies the mind, disciplines the mind and corrects it. The third type of yoga purifies the emotions, directs the emotions and disciplines the emotions. The fourth type of yoga corrects your personality, improves the quality of your personality and gives it proper balance. Another type of yoga purifies the intellect and understanding. Like this there are many branches of yoga.

These branches of yoga are known as karma yoga, hatha yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga, bhakti yoga, kriya yoga, laya yoga, kundalini yoga, nada yoga and mantra yoga. These are the divisions of the yogic science. I will not be able to tell you here which particular yoga you should practise because yoga should be learnt from an expert teacher. I am just giving you a glimpse of yogic science and nothing more.

There are two objectives before yoga which depend upon the desire of the people. There is a large group of people

who want happiness and health, then there is a small group of people who don't care for happiness, who don't care for health, who only care for the deeper inner experience. Therefore, according to desire of the person, yoga should be learnt and yoga should be taught.

The search for inner experience

When Socrates said, "Know thyself", he was trying to indicate the inner experience. Therefore, many people did not understand him during his own time because the spiritually minded people, who sincerely want to have that transcendental experience and who want to experience the deeper consciousness, are very few. The practices of kundalini yoga and kriya yoga are meant for these people. However, there are millions of people throughout the world who do not care for these deeper and intimate experiences. They want a life free from distress, free from tensions and free from problems.

The need for self-discipline

There are two objectives which yoga has to fulfil in our lives, but whichever is our objective there is one thing which is common to both. Whether you want happiness and health or you want inner experience, you must have a disciplined mind. You must have a disciplined mind because without it you cannot achieve anything in this world or in the inner world.

You discipline or train a wild horse, you discipline and train a wild dog. In the same way you have to discipline and train your mind. You can imagine what a wild horse can do and you can't use it at all. In the same way, humanity today is functioning without a disciplined mind. Whether it is a nation, a society or a family, most people or almost all people, have no discipline and no restraint over their minds. A disciplined mind functions within proper quotas, and it is not for me to explain and to prove the necessity of discipline to all of you.

All of you are sitting here in a disciplined way and I am talking to you, but if you become undisciplined now, what

can we do? I can't speak and you can't listen. However, there are many forms of discipline. Some forms are involuntary, they are imposed disciplines like socialism. It is imposed, it is not spontaneous, it is not natural, it is not voluntary. Like this there is military discipline, religious discipline, family discipline, but these various forms of discipline are just external, like a drill, physical training. Yoga talks about individual, voluntary discipline and this discipline is not only mental discipline, but integral discipline including the body, mind, emotions and ego. However, the first discipline is for the body.

Hatha yoga: the balance of forces

The yogic science of body discipline is known as hatha yoga. It is preliminary and basic discipline which every person who wants to practise yoga should learn, but then for hatha yoga, this body is not the only body. This body as you think of it is bone, blood, marrow and muscles, but yoga says it is more than that. In this physical body there are two forces, just like the forces in an electricity cable, and these forces in the body are material and objective. One force is called *prana*, the life force, the other force is called the mind. If there is a balance between these two forces, then you have no problems.

There are two types of diseases in the physical body. Yoga calls them psychosomatic diseases and somopsychic diseases. When the disease is born in the physical body and transferred to the mind it is called somopsychic; when it is born in the mind and transferred to the body it is called psychosomatic. Therefore, we should not say that all diseases are mental. Some diseases are mental or psychic in origin, but even so they are transferable.

If you have been suffering from a mental problem for one, two or three years, that problem is transferred to the physical body after some time in the form of physical symptoms. If you have been suffering from physical diseases for one, two or three years, then the disease is transferred to the mental body in the form of mental symptoms. Therefore,

in hatha yoga every disease is analyzed in two different ways. Suppose a person is suffering from peptic ulcer or maybe from high blood pressure or from a respiratory problem, the hatha yoga science tries to relate this disease to mind and body at the same time, because we believe that the imbalance between the pranic and mental forces is responsible for this.

Flows of energy

Within the framework of your spine there are two important nerve flows, one on the left and one on the right, which carry two types of energy from the bottom to the top. The two forms of energy are not philosophical, they are actual, they are tangible, they are clear and they can be measured by the most sophisticated scientific instruments.

These two flows are connected to the two nostrils, to the right and left hemispheres of the brain and the six centres of the body within the spine. One centre is at the top of the spine, another is in the neck, the third behind the heart, the fourth behind the navel, fifth in the sacrum and sixth in the perineum. From these six junctions or centres the two energies going to the left and right are distributed throughout the entire body by thousands and thousands of nerve channels. These two forces are known in yoga as *ida* and *pingala*. The ancient people called them the moon and sun. Modern science names them the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, and they are also known as the mind and prana. When you practise hatha yoga, these two forces are balanced.

Hatha yoga practices

I am not going to explain to you what hatha yoga is because your teacher can tell you that, but it is a practice in which you do asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha and six methods of purification of the body. *Asana* means ‘posture’: the posture of a cobra, a peacock, a fish, a lion, a locust, a camel, a bow, etc. Like this there are eighty-four major postures. According to classical yoga there are 8.4 million postures,

as many postures as there are species, however it is not necessary for you to learn and practise 8.4 million postures, because you have already practised them.

Then comes pranayama. Pranayama is connected with the breath in the two nostrils. The left nostril is connected with the right hemisphere of the brain and the right nostril is connected with the left hemisphere. When you breathe in or when you breathe out, you are working on the brain, the lungs and the heart. Pranayama primarily improves the body on all levels including the brain, the lungs, it trains the heart and stabilizes the nervous system. These are the important effects of pranayama on the physical body.

Effects of hatha yoga on the endocrine and nervous systems

Asana corrects the flow of endocrine secretions in the body. You know you have a thyroid gland, the pancreas and many other glands in the physical body. These glands sometimes behave in a very erratic way. Because of our eating habits, because of our lifestyle, because of so many reasons, these endocrine glands in our physical body do not function in a healthy way. These endocrine glands are controlled either by the sympathetic or parasympathetic nervous system.

When there is something wrong with the system, then you have problems with the endocrine secretions. For example, in diabetes the pancreas does not function. It does not produce insulin and therefore one has diabetes; but why does the pancreas stop functioning? Is it dead? No. The pancreas is controlled by the parasympathetic nervous system. When you are under constant stress and distress in life, then gradually the sympathetic nervous system gets blocked.

Constant stress after some times becomes distress. First there is a problem, maybe within the family, with the business or with your own mind. This problem becomes anxiety. This constant anxiety becomes high anxiety, then this becomes stress which finally becomes distress. You become restless

and this destroys the sympathetic nervous system and the pancreas stops functioning.

In modern science and in yogic science there is no contradiction. If you want to rejuvenate the pancreas, then you will have to resurrect the sympathetic nervous system. Therefore, people suffering from diabetes practise yoga nowadays and get better.

Raja yoga

Asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha and six systems of purification of the body are known as hatha yoga. There are many forms of yoga and it will not be possible for me to speak about them in one speech tonight, but before I close my speech I will talk to you about raja yoga, the yoga of the mind – the yoga of the total mind, the yoga of the external mind, the yoga of the middle mind and the yoga of the deeper mind. What is raja yoga? It is a yoga which concerns your thoughts, your feelings and your deeper nature, and this is the most systematic yoga.

Raja yoga talks about concentration, meditation and the experience of unity. I think if hatha yoga is practised in combination with raja yoga we will be able to fulfil the problems of our life. Hatha yoga is trying to control, discipline and correct the forces in the body; raja yoga is trying to discipline and control the forces in the mind. Mind is a combination of twenty-six elements. Mind is not homogeneous, it is a combination of many heterogeneous elements. Therefore, when you want to control the mind, you must know how to do it. You should not suppress the mind. If you suppress the mind there will be repression. Religions teach suppression, social discipline teaches us suppression, therefore you find the repression in society, but in yoga you should practise what we call meditation or dhyana yoga.

You should close your eyes for ten minutes, make your body stable, keep your spine upright and straight and you must concentrate on one point, one object, one thing for ten minutes. This is the beginning of raja yoga. Raja yoga is much

more than this, but you have to start practising somewhere. If you can, practise the lotus posture. If you can't, practise siddhasana and if you can't practise that, practise hatha yoga. In a few months time you will be able to sit properly, spine upright and straight, but not tense because the spine is a very important part of your body in yoga.

Later you will learn that within the spine there are very important nerve flows. The spine is not merely an assembly of vertebrae, there are very fine nerve flows in the spine and these nerves control your thought, your mind, your feelings and so many things. These nerves in the spine flow from the bottom to the top in an ascending fashion, not in a descending fashion. All this you will study and learn from yoga books.

You should also learn how to fix the inner gaze. When you close your eyes, where do you see, where do you look, where do you fix your eyes? In yoga there are many centres. The most important centre is in the middle of the eyebrows. Another important centre is at the tip of the nose. The third important centre is the centre of the heart. The fourth important centre is inside the brain. Another important centre is in the back of the brain on the top of the spine. Another important centre is in between the urinary and excretory systems, near the coccyx.

You have to fix your mind on one centre, on one point, for ten minutes. During these ten minutes you must try to experience the inner peace. You must decide, "For ten minutes I am not going to move my body, not going to open my eyes, not going to think of this or that. I will just think of one thing." This is the beginning of raja yoga. Practise hatha yoga and raja yoga. The practise of hatha yoga takes about fifteen minutes to begin with. Whether you are healthy or not, hatha yoga is a must if you want to practise raja yoga.

Guru yoga

After you have practised hatha yoga and you are starting raja yoga, there is an important transition. You can learn hatha yoga and raja yoga from your teacher, but after hatha yoga

and after the starting point of raja yoga, you will have to decide if you want to go further. Some people don't want to go further. They say, "Oh, I practise hatha yoga, raja yoga – good body, good mind, okay, nothing more." However, there are people who are not satisfied with this. They want to go further. They want to know more. They want to experience more and more. At that time you must go and search for a guru for yourself, not only a teacher.

There is a difference between a guru and a teacher. A teacher is a knower of the science, a teacher is an expert of the science, but a guru is a person who has experienced the invisible in himself. One who has known the self, as indicated by Socrates, is a guru. At this point, when you have started raja yoga and your mind becomes more keen to know and experience more, then first you must have 'guru yoga'. I call it 'guru yoga'. He will decide what you should practise. He will tell you how to practise, because it is important that man is not born just to die.

Death cannot be man's destiny. Death cannot be man's destiny, it is illogical. If death is the end of everything it is unphilosophical. Death is just a process of metamorphosis. The milk changes and curd is born. The curd changes and butter is born. The butter is broken and fat is born. Matter breaks and energy is born. Energy breaks and knowledge is born. Therefore, death is not the last thing in life. Death is just one event in life and life is eternal. This present life of ours is a link in a long chain. This is the fundamental philosophical truth which everybody has to understand.

Happiness comes and goes. Friends come and go, prosperity comes and goes. Youth also comes and goes; it is not eternal. Childhood is not eternal. Youth is not eternal. There is only one thing which is eternal – the self, the *atman*, but what is that? What is it? That is why, many hundreds of years ago, a great wise man, a great saint said, "Know thyself." Greek people remember that great wise man as Socrates, but they have failed to follow him. They know him through Plato's dialogues, that's all. I have come to remind you.

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Satsang

Rethymno and Iraklio, Crete, 27 April 1984

Swamiji, can you say that yoga is a system of discipline in all aspects of life?

Starting with the individual; the individual is the centre. In other systems society is the centre and the individual is at the periphery. Yoga, in my opinion, is the only science of individual discipline. It is what we call voluntary discipline and there is no doubt that voluntary disciplines is by all means superior to other forms of discipline such as political discipline, military discipline, religious discipline and police discipline, a nation becomes great through individual discipline.

Many thousands of years ago Socrates said, “Know thyself.” After these thousands of years I am also repeating the same thing. I have read Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, everybody – I have read all the dialogues of Plato. You see, Greek mythology and Hindu mythology are similar. In Greek mythology, Homer has also included the classic *Ramayana*. The great King Rama, his wife Sita, are part of Greek mythology. Greek mythology has so many references to Indian classics, especially the concept of Surya, the sun, with the horses. The concept of Saraswati, the goddess of learning is the same and of course you know the concept of Cupid or Kamadeva is the same.

Also you know the significance or the importance of tulsi, the basil plant. Greek people have a great respect for basil. In the Hindu religion tulsi is the highest and greatest. You can always identify a Hindu home by seeing basil, a tulsi plant, in front of the house.

There is another important thing. After Alexander the Great, his general, Seleucus, came to India and his sister, or daughter Helena, was married to the King of Patliputra, Patna, called Chandragupta. Many Greeks and Indians married each other after that. There is a tribe in India who have Greek features – you know, the bulged eyes, the long nose. For many hundreds of years India and Greece had diplomatic relationships. The first ambassador of Greece to India was Megasthenes. He has written many diaries about it. You can see them in your museum.

Another strikingly similar feature between Hindus and Greeks is the polytheistic religion. Before the advent of Christianity, Greece was polytheistic. The sun god, Saraswati, Aphrodite – so many gods they had! Hindus are also polytheistic; they have a god for everything.

Socrates said that God is one?

Yes, God is one. God is one, but that one is an infinite one. He has many forms – fire, water, ether; everything is His form.

It was mentioned yesterday that people are searching for happiness in places where they won't find happiness. However, a person with an economic problem, how can that person start occupying himself with himself if he has to support his family?

Happiness and unhappiness have nothing to do with poverty or prosperity. The people who are very prosperous in Europe and America are more unhappy than poor people in this country. If you study the statistics in Europe and America you will find that there are more mental cases, more crimes and more suicides in those countries. India is a very poor

country, but if you study the statistics there are less crimes, less mental cases and less suicides, because we have a philosophy. The Greek people have a philosophy. Americans have no philosophy.

Could you replace the word philosophy with religion?

No, religion is something else. Religion is a belief. Philosophy is an investigation; 'sophia' means 'knowledge of inner being', not of outside. Philosophy means the science of the knowledge of yourself, and in philosophy there is always investigation. Philosophy is open-minded. You may find new things again and again. Religion is closed. There is no investigation; there is faith. What is said in the book is final. There is no place for the intellect in religion; philosophy is primarily intellectual. In religion there is no rationalism; in philosophy there is only rationalism and no faith, therefore religion cannot represent philosophy.

How do you find the nature of the people of Crete?

I have read a lot about Crete in history. When I was told that I was going to have my program in Crete I was more than happy. Many things here remind me of Indian towns and I would like to come here again and again, not only for yoga, but to know the people and the country because I believe that this island has immense potential for the growth of yoga.

I will ask your leaders to think about the yogic movement on this island. They should invite me as many times as they can. I have my centre in Athens and they can always invite me and I will come.

Does the science of yoga mean tremendous discipline, to discipline the mind, the body and the whole self?

Yoga is primarily a science of disciplining the body, mind, emotion and intellect.

Could psychoanalysis supplement yoga in that case?

No, because in yoga and in psychoanalysis the fundamental definition of the mind is different. In yoga they say that the inner self is pure, luminous, sinless. In psychoanalysis the mind is a bundle of abnormal behaviour: schizophrenia, narcissism, guilt, all kinds of things are the qualities of the mind in psychoanalysis. That means that in psychoanalysis they say that in this gutter is only dirty water, so clean it. In yoga they say no, in this gutter is only pure water, you just remove the dirt.

Yoga believes in the grandeur of the human being or the human mind. Yoga believes that mind is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. It can become a super-mind. In psychoanalysis they don't believe anything like this. They only talk about mental problems.

The philosophy of psychoanalysis is mainly based on Freudian psychology and there is, of course, a great influence from Carl Jung on modern psychology. It is because Carl Jung was greatly influenced by yogic philosophy that he mentioned the inner disciplinary role of yoga in his writings.

What is yoga, suggestion or auto-suggestion?

The practice of yoga ranges from body to mind, emotion and intellect. In hatha yoga they balance the energies in the body. In bhakti yoga they try to fix the emotional balance. In jnana yoga they try to investigate the real nature of the self. In raja yoga they analyze the mind in detail. In karma yoga they try to understand the day – to – day problems of human life and try to fix them. In kundalini yoga they try to awaken the sleeping centres in the brain. Therefore yoga is not a suggestive science.

What is the role of the guru and why must a disciple contact a guru after a certain stage?

The role of guru is to realize the karma of his disciple, to realize the total destiny of the disciple. According to that he will suggest to him what to do. That is the main role of a

guru in the life of a disciple. Just as a jeweller analyses the jewels in detail, similarly the guru analyzes the total destiny, nature and quality of the disciple. Before I teach what you have to do, I have to find out the level of your evolution and I will also have to find out what your limitations are. I have to find out to which degree you are attached to worldly things and to which degree you can transcend them.

Then a disciple allows the guru to handle his ego. If you allow me to handle your ego, then I can tell you what to do, because ego is very hard stuff. That is the basis of your individuality, because of your ego you are different from me. If you remove your ego, then there is no difference, we are one.

Sometimes in an individual there are two egos. If you have two egos then you will find difficulty in adjusting with yourself. In the same way, I have an ego and you have an ego; therefore we are two and not one. A disciple withdraws his ego and then the guru can understand him.

Without removing the ego it is not possible for guru to understand the disciple. Ego is like a hard shell and if I want to penetrate into you I can't, because you are closed, therefore in spiritual life, or for spiritual life, the guru and disciple relationship is not only most important, it is the only important thing.

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The Revival of the Science of Yoga

AG Nikolas Minos Beach Hotel, Crete, 2 April 1984

I have wanted to discover what the future of yoga is in the world and this has led me even to the countries behind the iron curtain. Scientists, thinkers and men of education are very much concerned about the situation in the world, especially with the people, and they have come to the conclusion that the science of yoga will benefit humanity immensely.

Yoga is neither a religion nor a sect. It is not based on beliefs or dogmas. It is a science which is intimately connected with human health and the state of mind. Of course, there is another side of yoga which is connected with the mental powers of man, but most people believe and think that yoga is a way to health and mental happiness.

The healing aspect

A lot of scientific investigations have been done by the men of science, particularly doctors, and they have found that the practice of yoga is a wonderful system for health and also for therapy. Throughout the world many thousands of yoga schools have sprung up and they are dedicated to the treatment of chronic illnesses. In European countries there are about 72,000 registered yoga teachers and people go to those yoga schools in order to recoup their health. In the

United Kingdom yoga is being taught to patients suffering from multiple sclerosis and they have improved. As a result, institutions have now started yoga therapy in a regular fashion.

The scientific studies on yoga have revealed that yoga can successfully treat many chronic, and hitherto, incurable diseases like rheumatism, sciatica and asthma. In the beginning people were very sceptical. It was difficult to believe that yoga could cure all these illnesses when the sophisticated and highly advanced medical science had failed.

Now people in medicine do believe that in yoga there is a cure and they confess that in their own system there is no cure, just relief. If someone is suffering from high blood pressure and undergoes medication, he just gets relief. That's not a cure; he is going to get it again. However, the system of yoga reaches what we call the esoteric systems of the body and not just the exoteric systems.

This body has two systems, esoteric and exoteric. The exoteric is that which we study in modern science: anatomy and physiology. In the esoteric system, yoga talks about two forces in the physical body. These two forces are in the form of energy flows and these two forces control each and every organ, and each and every particle of this body. One system controls the mental functions and the other controls the life functions. Both must be in total harmony because when there is imbalance between these mental and life forces there is disease in the physical body.

Psychosomatic and somopsychic

The two forms of disease, resulting on account of imbalance between these mental and life forces, are either somatic or psychic.

For example, when the life force becomes weak, then you have somatic diseases, when the mental force becomes weak, then you have psychic diseases. Psychic disease, in the course of time, becomes somatic as well. In the same way, a somatic

disease, in the course of time, becomes psychic. For example, if one is suffering from asthma for one, two or three years it affects one's mind and becomes a psychic problem. If one is suffering from anxiety or stress, in the course of a few years it will develop into ulcer, tumour, cancer and so on.

Distribution of energy in the body

Within the framework of the spine you have two important nadis flowing from the bottom to the top. These two nadis carry two types of forces. One is responsible for all your mental activities – thinking, reasoning, etc. The other carries the life function which is responsible for your physical activities. These two forces are situated on the left and right side of the spine, and within the spine there are six junctions, centres. These six centres are situated first at the coccyx, second in the sacral region, third in the solar plexus, fourth in the cardiac plexus, fifth in the cervical plexus and sixth in the medulla oblongata. Through these junctions, these twofold forces or energies are distributed throughout the body.

In the physical body, more than 130,000 channels, or *nadis*, distribute this energy to every part. Out of these 130,000 we find 72,000 channels are situated just in the heart centre, the cardiac region. When there is a block of energy in a particular part of the body sickness develops.

Hatha yoga

The science of hatha yoga has become very popular throughout Europe and the Western world. It is comprised of yoga postures, breathing and six processes of purifying the physical body, the exoteric body.

First, the external body of nerves, blood, mucus, etc., must be purified. Then there are certain postures known as yoga asanas. They are not exercises, they are positions or postures, such as the cobra posture, peacock posture and fish posture. These postures relate to many animals and, by assuming these postures, you are able to create a balance or harmony in these two forces.

Second comes pranayama or breathing practice. The breathing practice is connected with the lungs, heart, nervous system and brain. There are different forms of breathing in yoga. They are not only intended for oxygenation of the body, because in hatha yoga they say that the two nostrils are directly connected with the two hemispheres of the brain, the lungs, the heart and both nervous systems.

It is not only so with pranayama. Even your normal breathing which you do every day is related, not only with the lungs, but with the heart, nervous system and brain at the same time. When the breathing is not correct, then diseases connected or related with their functions originate. Therefore, in hatha yoga or in yoga, the practice of pranayama is applauded very much. Hatha yoga is the basis of all other forms of yoga.

Raja yoga

There is another form of yoga which is becoming popular in America and other parts of the world. In fact many thinkers come to India in order to learn that yoga because teachers of hatha yoga are available everywhere in the world, but the system of raja yoga is related to the human mind and human consciousness. The people of our times have found that mind and consciousness play a leading role in man's life concerning his feelings and experiences.

In fact people nowadays, especially doctors, talk about diseases born of stress. Formerly they used to talk about diseases due to bacteria, viruses and other infections, but now they have come to the conclusion that diseases are born of stress and stress is a condition of the mind, of consciousness and human thinking. It is an erroneous way of thinking that gradually develops stress in the course of time, in the course of a few years.

When you are young you don't feel it because you have a strong nervous system, a young brain and a young body, but as you grow older you begin to feel the stress, and not only

you, your body begins to feel the stress. As a result of this stress there are many diseases. A high percentage of all diseases are considered to be born of stress. Migraine can be born of stress; not only migraine, but also many serious diseases such as high blood pressure or cardiovascular diseases, even high fever, hysteria, epilepsy and schizophrenia. There is no end to the list of sicknesses born of stress.

What is the way of getting rid of stress? First there is tension, then there is stress and when this stress is continued it gains momentum and there comes a moment when stress becomes distress. You are completely down; it's called a nervous breakdown. They have found that the science of raja yoga can successfully check that stress.

Taming the mind

Raja yoga is a very ancient science. The ancient text of raja yoga says that you should and must learn to control the fluctuations of the mind by constant practice. The mind is wild because it is not trained. Social training, cultural training, religious training, academic training is not a training of the mind. Mental training is internal discipline, it is your own discipline.

When an undesirable thought comes in your mind and you don't want it, can you stop it? No, we can't stop it, most of us cannot, and as a result of that thought we have a lot of mental suffering. This proves that we do not have control over the functions and activities of our mind, therefore we suffer from stress and tensions.

In raja yoga you have the science of meditation. This science deals with one-pointedness of mind and concentration. When you try to concentrate your mind for a few minutes, at once the waves in the brain change. You try to concentrate for a few minutes and ask your doctor to take your blood pressure. In five minutes it will drop and not only the blood pressure, but the brainwaves will also change.

This science of meditation is a very important science for the growth and discipline of your body and mind at the

same time, but how to meditate is a very difficult question. Just closing your eyes and fighting with your mind does not develop meditation. There are various ways of practising meditation and these methods must be learned from a teacher because raja yoga is a science which relates to the mind, its growth and evolution.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Could you tell us what is the meaning of yoga?

I think I have already spoken about it, but I will tell you again. The literal meaning of *yoga* is union, harmony, balance and concord. This means harmony and concord between the body and the mind.

How can we achieve it?

By certain practices relating to the body and mind. There are certain forms of yoga which I explained just now. Hatha yoga is the science of the esoteric and exoteric bodies. Raja yoga is the science which deals with practices for the mind. Bhakti yoga is the science which deals with practices for balancing the emotions. Karma yoga gives practices for the total personality of man. Mantra yoga is the practice for developing concentration and meditation. Yoga nidra is a practice for relaxing the body and nervous system. Kriya yoga is a practice for those people who want to go high in the path of spiritual experiences.

In this way, there are other forms of yoga which are only for those who want to go into the practice of higher yoga. Those practices are known as the practices of kundalini yoga. Those who want physical health and mental peace or emotional peace or mental health should practise the lower forms of yoga. According to the system, one must practice yoga gradually, but there can be some exceptions too. Some people are very brilliant and they can start higher yoga straight away, but as far as teaching is concerned, it is better that one should start yoga in a gradual way.

In the beginning one has to learn yoga from a teacher. An expert teacher can teach you raja yoga, bhakti yoga, etc., but if you want to go deeper and higher in the field of experience then it is very important that you must find a guru, because he has to find out the scale or point of your evolution. According to the growth of your evolution he will find out which particular form of higher yoga is suitable for your personal growth.

To find a guru and to recognize a guru is also a form of yoga and for that you have to practise some form of yoga in the beginning. After you have practised yoga for some time, the preliminary forms of yoga, then you will develop a sort of insight and then it is easy for you to recognize the guru for yourself.

Is there any conflict for a person who is already living family life and who wants to follow spiritual life?

There is no conflict; there is no contradiction between spiritual life or yogic life or family life. Of course, many people do feel that they are incompatible, but one's family life is really a stepping-stone to one's spiritual growth. By every definition, as far as I know, family life is an aid to inner experience, but of course it is necessary for one to maintain a proper balance or relationship between one's practices and duties or obligations. Sometimes people over-emphasize spiritual life and sometimes they over-emphasize family life; that is imbalance.

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Exoteric and Esoteric Yoga

Rhodes, 30 April 1984

There are various opinions, positive as well as negative, on yogic science, but in recent years modern science has exploded the myths about yoga. The question before them is whether it is possible to deal with psychic and somatic diseases through certain practices of yoga, and the conclusions the scientists have come to prove say that it is possible.

Basically, there are two forms of yoga known as esoteric and exoteric yoga. There are certain yoga practices which are directly linked with the body, mind, emotions and intellect. These practices which are related to the external side of man can be known as exoteric yoga. This form of yoga has become very popular with the young people of the world today because there are thousands of teachers in every part of the world who are engaged in teaching this exoteric system, all for the betterment of mankind.

This system of yoga is very easy and at the same time it has no spiritual or occult significance. There are millions of people in the world who do not care for the mystic life, for mystic experience or for spiritual life, what they need is a healthy body and a mind which can cope with stress.

It has been found, that stress is the greatest enemy of our present civilization. First there is tension, then there

is anxiety and that is followed by stress. Finally, it dissolves into distress. Many ways have been tried in order to resolve stressful situations by various methods. Sometimes the stress is just superficial and we can manage it, but many times stress becomes the nature of our personalities and then it becomes very difficult to handle. You must have seen many people who, by nature, are always under stress conditions and they don't know how else to function. According to yoga and according to modern science, it is the cause of most diseases today. It is not only high blood pressure or cardiovascular disease, even peptic ulcer, diabetes and migraine can be caused by stress. The system of yoga which deals with these problems is exoteric.

Esoteric yoga

There is another form of yoga known as esoteric yoga or the yoga of spiritual life. This system of yoga is meant for a few people who are really qualified to take the spiritual path, therefore this yoga is not taught by teachers, but it is taught by the guru himself to a disciple.

Of course, according to the traditional system of yoga, exoteric yoga is the preliminary path and esoteric forms of yoga are the higher path. Both of them are connected and interdependent. The philosophy of this inner yoga says that man is more than this body and mind. The body is not the man and the mind is not the man; the real person, the real self, is behind these. Therefore, it is necessary for everyone to discover the self.

It is the primary hypothesis, in the system of yoga, that man does not know himself. What you know is your body and your name. Many people do not even know what lies in their mind; therefore most people are in a state of ignorance. This ignorance, this nescience, is something like blindness. A blind man cannot see the sun, but he knows that there is a sun. You can explain to him what the sun is like. If he is intelligent maybe he can understand theoretically, but he cannot see the sun unless he can open his eyes. In the same

way, if I tell you that you have something more in you, the self, or the I, or the light, or something like that, you may agree, but you can't see it.

One message

Many thousands of years ago in India the wise men, sages, seers and rishis, said that you should know who you are. Their writings are in the form of the Upanishads. They said, "You are not this body, nor are you the senses, nor this mind, nor material existence – you are effulgent and infinite, and a homogeneous something."

Afterwards there appeared a great man in India, his name was Buddha. He used to call this state of knowledge nirvana. He said that when you transcend the body idea and other material ideas, then you come to an experience which is called nirvana. A little later there appeared another wise man, a great seer or philosopher, in Greece. He used to say to all his followers, admirers and friends just one phrase, "Know thyself." Socrates was his name. He said many things; and of course the people of Greece know all about it, but the central theme of his teachings was just two words, "Know thyself."

In India this was the teaching of the Vedas and the Upanishads. This was the teaching of Buddha and the teaching of Socrates. When you say, "Know thyself", it really means that you must know that self which you do not know. Knowledge of the self comes to one gradually, step by step.

The layers of being

You must know the mind, but before you know the mind, you must know the forces within your body. You know about your body, well there is no doubt about it. It is composed of bones, blood, muscles, nerves, marrow, so on and so forth, but the question is, "Is there nothing beyond this?"

Do we live by blood, bones, muscles, nerves and marrow? No, in this physical body there are forces of energy. In yoga they are known as the solar and lunar forces. These

two forces in your physical body control your life and your mental functions. Knowledge of these two forces can come to you through the practices of hatha yoga, but besides these two forces there are other forces in you. For example, emotional force: we love and we hate, we have feelings and sentiments, we have jealousy, we have anger. These are manifestations of emotion. If that force is not in you then you can't love, you can't hate.

Take a very gross example: the electric light proves that there is energy because it cannot shine without that energy, so there is a force behind the light. In the same way there is hatred, love, jealousy, greed and anger. These are what we call manifestations or expressions of a particular force. That force has to be realized. You can realize that force through the practices of the bhakti yoga system, but behind these physical, material and natural forces there is something more.

Stopping the mind

How to experience it? Can you experience it just by thinking? Is it possible for your mind to experience it or do you have to transcend the mind to experience that? This is a very difficult situation. In yoga they say very clearly – you stop the mind and then you will have experience, because mind is finite, mind is born of matter, mind functions within time and space. Mind has got its limited dimensions, the categories of mind are time, space and object.

The experience which Socrates mentioned and which Buddha called nirvana is not the subject matter of the mind. Those people who are trying to discover this state of experience will certainly come to a point of realization that mind has to be transcended, because when we meditate or contemplate we are moving within the realms of our own mind and not beyond the mind.

Even in modern science there is certain behaviour which cannot be determined by any laws of the mind. The great scientist, Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, talks about the law

of indeterminacy. He is observing the funny, illogical and unmathematical behaviour of electrons. When there is a movement in matter it is scientifically and mathematically predictable, but when matter is behaving in an eccentric way, what are you going to conclude or what are you going to say? The scientist says that this indeterminacy of behaviour in the electrons can only be understood if the mind can jump over the mind.

I just wanted to let you know that the mind behaves within a determined law. In order to have that deeper experience your mind will have to jump over the mind, but when all is said and all is understood, one question remains: how to do it? For thousands of years people have been trying to have that experience. For thousands of years people have tried to get out of the boundaries of mundane experience. They have been trying to go beyond the empirical experience, but then how to do it? Because mind seems to stand as a barrier between myself and the experience. It is here that the practices of esoteric yoga come to our practical help.

Prana: the life force

In the system of yoga they have made it very clear that life controls mind and mind controls life. The life force is called *prana* in yoga. Prana is individual life force and cosmic life force. It is not the breath we inhale. It is not the oxygen by which we live. This life force is a creative force which is responsible for existence and for evolution. When there is disturbance in the life force, there is disturbance in the mind.

In yoga there are two clear concepts: the total life force is called macrocosmic life and the individual life force is known as microcosmic life. In the same way, there is the macrocosmic mind and there is the microcosmic mind. If you want to control the mind you must learn to control the prana, or if you want to control the pranic force then you should control the mind first.

Pranayama: controlling the life force

How to control the prana? The pranas should be controlled through the practice of pranayama which is linked through this body to the cosmic prana. You see, just as you have an electromagnetic field or a radioactive field and many other fields through which energy flows, in the same way, in your body there is a pranic field. Not only inside, but outside the body also there is a pranic field. You are linked with that cosmic, pranic field.

How is it? Let me give you an example. Put a radio here. Tune it to certain frequencies. Immediately you are connected with Athens, BBC, Voice of America. Whichever frequency you tune to, you are immediately connected through that field, there is a link. In the same way the pranic field, the life field in this physical body is linked with the cosmic prana, with the total pranic force. In order to communicate with the higher field of prana, it is necessary that you should be able to purify your pranic force through yoga practices.

Most of us do not even know that we breathe. Do you know that you breathe? Just try to understand this one small thing. From the time of your birth until death you breathe, unbroken breathing. You breathe consciously and unconsciously, voluntarily and involuntarily, but mostly unconsciously. The whole night you are breathing, but you don't know it. The whole day you are breathing, but you don't know it. When you are a baby you are breathing, but you don't know it. Is it not something very surprising that your breathing process, which is so intimate, so important, so close, is something you don't know about and have never known?

Just become aware of the breath, because this is the way. This breath is very gross. The breath is tangible. You can feel it, you can understand it, you can concentrate on it, you can observe its inspiration and its expiration. It may not be possible for one hour, but at least for ten minutes you can do it, because it is not abstract. I am not trying to tell you to concentrate on something abstract.

Therefore our yoga starts with pranic awareness. Of course there may be people in this world who may not be able to feel their breath. In 1968 I went to one country. I will not tell you the name of that country. There, I was invited for an interview by the editor of a national newspaper. He wanted to print something in his newspaper about yoga. I was explaining to him about concentration, awareness, alternating inspiration and expiration, but that man could not understand it. He asked me, "I breathe, but how do I know?" There are very gross people in the world who do not even know that they are breathing, of course, for them there is another preliminary yoga.

Mantra

When you have established your concentration on the breathing process for some time, then you can go to the next step. More subtle than the life force is sound. I don't mean the sound that I make when I am talking to you. When I say sound, I mean the higher frequencies of sound which cannot be heard through the ears. This sound is also a cosmic matter. This sound is known in yoga as *mantra*. Mantra is a sound which is a form of your inner concentration. When you are able to visualize your own breath, then you must try to discover the sound of the breath. This is how you go, step by step, within.

The third eye

When you have discovered the sound, then you should concentrate on a centre in the middle of the eyebrows. There are many important centres on which you can concentrate within the body. You can concentrate on the tip of the nose, in the centre of the heart, on the centre in the navel, on the top of the brain, but the centre in the middle of the eyebrows is a very powerful centre.

This particular centre has been well known throughout the world through the ages. In the times of the Atlantean civilization they used to concentrate on this as a third

eye. The third eye represents the eye of intuition. By concentrating on this particular centre you develop a tiny spark of light. This tiny spark can be manifested by concentrating at the eyebrow. If you find it difficult to concentrate on that centre then there are some preliminary practices.

The practice of trataka

One practice I can tell you about is very simple. Place a lit candle in front of you and make the flame steady. Keep the body steady, spine upright and straight. First, pacify your mind by concentrating on the breath, then gaze at the steady flame of the candle for as long as it is easy or comfortable to do so. Then close your eyes and concentrate on the middle of the eyebrows. You will find the reflection of the candle. Gradually the flame will disappear. Finally, after a few days, a tiny spark of light will remain.

In yoga this tiny spark is known as the bindu. *Bindu* means ‘a point’. Bindu means ‘a drop’. Bindu means ‘a centre’. Bindu also means ‘a nucleus’. This particular spark of light becomes the central point of inner experience. What happens after that is not necessary for me to tell you now, because it is a matter of understanding, it is a matter of discussion between a guru and disciple. For this you need a guru and not just a teacher.

The teacher of yoga has knowledge. He is an expert, he can teach you pranayama, asana, etc., but a guru has not only knowledge, but experience. Experience is something which is very intimate to your inner self. When Buddha said, “nirvana”, and Socrates said, “Know thyself”, and the Upanishads also said, “Know thyself” – what they meant exactly was know your experience.

Inner experience

This particular experience is known by various names, but don’t be deluded by names. We have to give some name. Socrates said ‘self’, the Upanishads said ‘atman’, Buddha

said 'nirvana'. I call it experience. Everything is synonymous. We do not try to explain definitions or names; it is a process of reducing the gross into the subtle.

Just as when you go outside you can hear music, you see flowers and things; through the mind you have pleasure and pain, through the mind you have external, sensorial experience. Just as the mind projects itself out, in the same way the mind should withdraw itself inside. Every night you withdraw yourself into profound sleep and you know nothing during that time, you don't know who is next to you, you don't know where you are or even who you are, but every morning you come out. So, you know how to go to sleep and how to get up. In the same way, yoga tells us that if you know how to go out and experience the external world, you should also know how to go in and experience the inner world.

The external problem

This is the problem of our culture today and, on account of this problem, we are unhappy. On account of this problem we are dissatisfied, because we only know how to project outside and we do not know how to go inside. You should try to experience inner life as much as you are experiencing the external life. You will get great satisfaction because this is a state of balance.

Our culture is an unbalanced culture. I mean to say, modern culture is an unbalanced culture, because its emphasis is on matter. It's all right, but why only over-emphasize matter? Is matter the only definition of life? No, even scientists don't agree. Scientists started with physics. Our scientists started the whole game with physics and now they are in metaphysics. Einstein and many other scientists do not say that matter is ultimate and absolute. In fact, matter is a gross form of energy. Therefore we must accept energy and not matter.

Yoga goes a bit further. What is the philosophy of yoga? The philosophy of yoga states that matter is the gross form of energy or *shakti*, but energy is the gross form of

consciousness, the self or *atma*. Consciousness is *atma*; consciousness is the self of Socrates. This consciousness, when it becomes gross, becomes energy. That is the first manifestation. In later manifestations it becomes matter.

The long journey

In yoga, you have to reverse the whole process. From matter you reverse to energy, from energy you go back to consciousness. This energy needs meditation, *dhyana yoga*. These are the rules: sit down quietly, close your eyes, fix your mind, forget everything and go in as much as you can. Day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, go in.

In this life you may not know the self, but you will be well on the way. What you don't achieve in this life you can always achieve later because life is eternal. Life is not bound by time. Death does not destroy life, it only changes the experience of life.

Well, I have not been able to tell you more about yoga, there is too much to talk about. I can only request all of you to give a little thought to the necessity of yoga in your life. If you are spiritual, well and good, but if not, at least you will be able to achieve good health and a healthy mind. Yoga is down to earth and practical. There are so many practices and I am sure that you have enough inspiration to start.

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Press Conference

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 2 May 1984

About how many people practise yoga in Greece?

It is not possible to give any specific number because yoga is so popular nowadays that many thousands of people practise it. Some years ago many people feared that it was a religion and, well, they had their own suspicions, but in recent years science has accepted yoga. Even in space they are experimenting on yoga.

What moved the people to come closer to yoga?

They have seen that it is very useful for their physical, emotional and mental health. Today there is a lot of stress in everybody's life and on account of this stress there is mental and physical suffering. If people take to medicine it also has negative and far reaching effects, therefore people are turning more and more to the practices of yoga as the scientists are advocating.

What does it mean exactly, that medicine has far reaching negative effects?

All the scientists are saying these days that the medicines which we take have negative effects in the course of time. They do cure one form of illness, but then they create another form of illness.

What are the three basic types of people who follow yoga?

There are those people who are having physical problems, those who are undergoing mental stress and those who want to know about themselves.

What is the youngest and oldest age one can practise yoga?

One can start practising yoga from the age of eight and practise it up to any age, according to one's physical health. One can make a little change here and there in the practices of yoga if one is old. There are some mental and spiritual forms of yoga which can be done even by someone who is physically very weak.

A yoga union was recently reported in Greece. How many members are there in the union and how many in the world?

Yoga does not have any membership because it is a vast movement and even people engaged in teaching yoga number many thousands. However, one thing can be said, that the people who believe in yoga come from every section of society; you can be an ordinary worker in the factory, or a scientist, a philosopher or an industrial magnate. About four years ago they found the number of registered yoga teachers in Western Europe was over 72,000. From this you can imagine how many people must be practising.

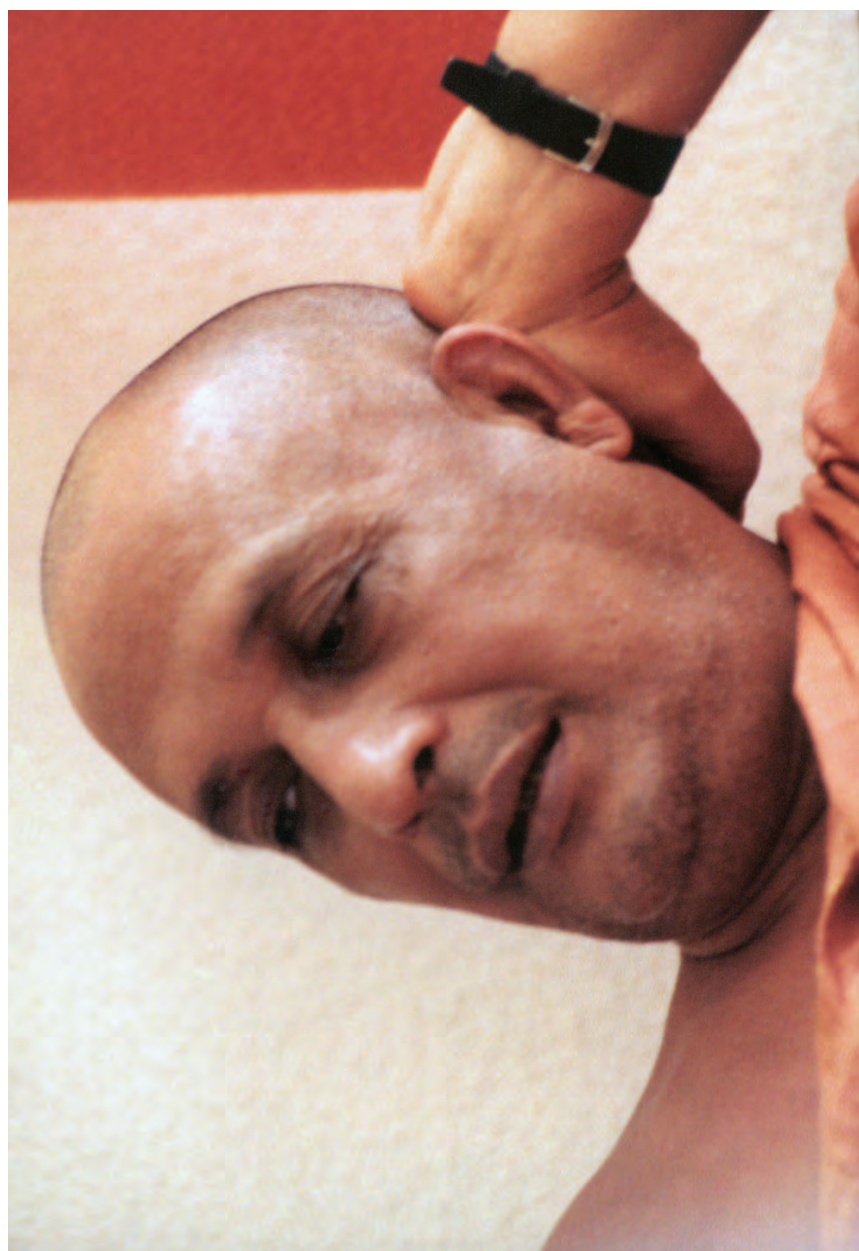
Do the people who actually practise yoga have a professional life or become secluded?

Yoga has nothing to do with seclusion. Yoga is a system of physical and mental health, and therefore people who have their own professional life need yoga more than a person who is living in seclusion.

What are the solutions that yoga has to offer people who have either physical or mental problems?

Yoga is a system of practical techniques which are to be practised by the person every day. These practices are

















sometimes physical, sometimes mental and sometimes spiritual. If, for example, one is suffering asthma, then one is taught to practise certain techniques every day which include some physical postures and breathing techniques. If someone is suffering from high blood pressure or coronary problems they are taught the techniques of relaxation and concentration. Like this, we have various techniques in yoga.

I read that the reason we have a lot of tension is because we have lots of thoughts and desires, and this shows that the mind is not under our control. An article said that one shouldn't worry, but occupy the mind with other things in life.

Stress is very necessary for the evolution of life. If there were no stress you would be like a vegetable. The nation, society and the individual would not grow, but then there is a limit to the amount of stress which man can handle. Maybe if one has a strong mind one can handle greater stress, but many people can't handle a lot of stress, they get heart problems, blood pressure and so on.

So we have to do two things at the same time: firstly, increase our nervous resistance through pranayama and concentration, secondly, decrease the stress. When the stress continues for some time it creates problems and sometimes the stress continues for the whole day and the whole night.

If you have control of the mind then you can stop thinking about the stress. You can occupy your mind with some positive thing, but that alone will not do because after some time you will come back to the stress. We can't escape the reality of stress, therefore it is important that we increase the capacity of our brain, heart and nervous system. For this purpose there are practices of yoga, which cannot eliminate, but can balance the stress.

There is another aspect of stress which is biochemical. When the stress continues in the body for some time, then

the body begins to secrete chemicals and if this secretion of chemicals continues off and on then it is very dangerous. It can cause peptic ulcer, migraine, even cancer or a heart attack, nervous breakdown, menstrual or hormonal problems. How to stop that? It is here that yoga comes into the picture. There are certain practices of yoga which stop this process of biochemical secretion.

Are people who practise yoga usually vegetarian?

No, it is not at all necessary to be a vegetarian for the practice of yoga. These are two independent issues. In certain cases vegetarianism is harmful, but that has nothing to do with yoga. In certain cases vegetarianism is good for the body, so one has to use common sense here. Practices of yoga are connected with the average person. There are now millions of Americans, Japanese and Europeans practising yoga, sometimes they are advised to take a non-vegetarian diet, according to their problems.

Is there any special reason why you all wear the same clothes and have short hair or shaved heads?

We are sannyasins which means that we are dedicated to spiritual life and therefore we try to live in a very disciplined and orderly manner. Throughout the world there are so many dedicated people like us that if we do not live a disciplined life, but live in a haphazard way, according to our own whims, then there would be a lot of chaos. You know, just like in an army or among medical surgeons, with us also, discipline is necessary.

This colour represents a certain psycho-emotional quality; not depression, sensuality or austerity. It represents a dynamic life with great ideals and therefore I have founded this system throughout the world. We have people from the Hindu religion, Muslim religion, Jews and Christians, believers and non-believers in God. Men and women come from different parts, but here they appear as one.

How does yoga help in knowing oneself?

This is a very important and ancient part of yoga. When one wants to know about one's self, first of all one should search for the right person from whom one can receive direction. That right person is known as a guru. Then this guru will find out the extent of the evolution of the person and will decide what practices they should do.

These practices are known as higher yoga, you can say esoteric yoga. This is when meditation is taught and the energy centres in the body are known. Then the mind is lifted a little above the normal life and gradually one begins to experience the inner life. One begins to realize one's own mind, emotions and ego. Gradually one is taken further and further into the self. This particular yoga is taught by a guru to his disciple.



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Transcending Karma

Omilos Exipiretiton, Athens, 2 May 1984

In this world everything is so easy and everything is so intellectual, that we can understand by a process of thinking. Our mind is built in such a way that it can understand everything that is empirical and everything that is material.

In the process of creation we find that there are two types of movements. We can call those two processes evolution and involution. The process of evolution is an outcome of the laws of some sort of nature. In the realm of minerals, in the realm of vegetables, in the realm of animals and also in the realm of human beings the entire process of evolution is controlled by some sort of nature.

Prakriti and purusha: nature and consciousness

According to yoga, the whole process of evolution comes within the realm of *prakriti*, or nature, and this evolution is concerned with the mind, emotion, intellect and ego. For example, a vegetable could not think or an animal did not have the quality of intellectual cognition, but as evolution continued that property came into existence and man could cognize. Yoga is basically the path of involution because here you are not trying to understand the realm of nature or the properties or qualities of nature, but you are trying to understand the nature of consciousness, *purusha*. From this we

also come to understand the properties or qualities of nature, but you are trying to understand the nature of consciousness.

From this we also come to understand that there are two worlds or two universes. One universe is created, directed and controlled by nature, and another universe is made up of consciousness, *chit* or *atma*. This universe is made up of self. It was this self that Socrates wanted us to know. The other important thing is that the external universe is finite and imperfect. The external world which I am talking about, which is subject to the evolution of nature, is divided. It is not homogeneous, not infinite, nor complete, whereas the inner universe is one; it is complete, it is infinite. In yoga, therefore, the process is from finite to infinite, from diversity to unity, from prakriti to purusha.

Avidya: blindness

There is a problem. We can see the external universe, however incomplete that is. We can understand the movement and the nature of laws and objects, but if you try to look into yourself you see nothing. It seems that a dark curtain is drawn between yourself and the object. This is called blindness. Why can't you see something which is within you? How funny it is that you are able to see something which is outside you! You are able to see something which you are not and you are not able to see something which you are. The jewel is in the pocket, but you don't know it; this is called blindness. In yoga it is called *avidya* ignorance or nescience.

Incapacity to experience yourself is on account of a great force called avidya, therefore one of the missions of yoga should be to destroy that avidya. Whichever form of yoga you adopt for yourself, the first mission or the first purpose of that should be to rend asunder that veil.

We do try to meditate because we are sincere people. We meditate for decades, but we are not able to jump over the mind. Every experience that we have through meditation is certainly nothing but a quality of our own mind, but we

are not practising in order to know the mind. We have been practising in order to transcend the mind, in order to jump over the mind and yet, every time we try to jump over the mind, we are within the mind. This has been the problem of everybody. If you don't recognize the problem, that's okay, but if you do recognize it you will realize that this problem is a hard nut to crack.

The practical technique of tantra

At the age of eighteen I was first initiated into the practical techniques of tantra by a thirty-five year old tantric yogini. She was able to detonate very good experiences in me, but I realized that I was not able to go beyond the fence. I could go to a particular point in experience and stay there, stagnant. By that time she had already gone somewhere else, God knows where. Now I understand that, even if she had been there, she couldn't have done it because she taught me a very important and powerful system of penetrating into the abyss of the mind, but she could not and did not teach me how to become mindless. Every experience I had with her was a mental experience. It could have been a subconscious mental experience, it could have been an unconscious mental experience, but it was not a mindless experience.

Service of the guru: karma yoga

To be brief, that brought me to guru. I myself did not know how my guru would help me, but one thing he told me, "Work hard, serve me, then the mind will be purified", and that did the work. Therefore, all yoga aspirants must understand the relevance of work, the relevance of karma yoga in the science of raja yoga or other forms of yoga. You should try to purify the contents of the mind, then experience comes to you spontaneously.

The avidya, the blindness or ignorance, exists in your karma and the totality of karma creates ignorance. These karmas we have inherited. These karmas we have been carrying with us in our inner body, incarnation after

incarnation. These karmas are in many forms in us and that is what we call the centre of human gravity. Just as you throw a stone up meters high, but finally it comes down because of the force of gravity, in the same way you throw the mind high and penetrate into yourself, but again it will come down to the same point of ignorance because the mind is attached to the creation of prakriti. Every time you shoot the mind high up into the spiritual life it comes down to the same point again. It is here that the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita* seems to be very relevant because it says to involve yourself in action, in total action, with a spirit of inaction.

Classical explanations of karma

There is a parable in the Buddhist chronicles. One of the disciples of Buddha, Nagarjuna, came to Greece. King Menander was the ruler. The king asked Nagarjuna how to fix his karma. He said to Nagarjuna that every time we try to go beyond karma we come back to karma, again and again. It is also neither possible nor practical, nor even advisable for us to become inactive. We don't destroy karma by becoming inactive.

So, what did Nagarjuna tell him? He asked the king about a handful of gram. He divided that into two parts; one part he gave to the king and asked for it to be roasted, the other part he asked to have planted in a flowerpot somewhere. Then he said, "Oh king, the roasted gram will not germinate because it has lost the potential of its karma, but the other part of the gram will germinate and grow because it has its karma, its samskara, its archetypes intact. When this seed comes in contact with water, earth, air and sun, it will germinate.

The same thing is said in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Mind, with the help of the senses in association with the objects, creates an external sensual experience. Throughout life, whichever experiences you are having during waking or during dream are an outcome of combinations of mind, senses and object. However, you have to remember one thing: mind, object and senses themselves do not create an experience. For experience,

there has to be a seed, there has to be a kalpa, there has to be passion, what they call *vasana*. If there is no karma, then mind, object and senses can create nothing. Therefore, through the practices of yoga you don't kill the mind, you don't kill the senses and you don't denounce the object; you are only trying to roast the potential seed, that's all.

In the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali it is said that the craving for the object which you have seen and which you have heard must be controlled. Deep within the mind there is a craving, sometimes you know about it, sometimes you don't, or that's what the psychologists tell us and maybe you also know it. Many times you are thirsty, but you don't know it. Many times you have cravings you don't know about, but when you face the object, then you will be thirsty.

This thirst is dependent on a previous experience of a particular type. These experiences are primarily of five types: those related to visual perception, audition, taste, touch (tactual consciousness) and smell. The mind associates with the object through one, two, three, four or all of the five faculties, but then it is important to have this experience already somewhere within you, therefore sense experience has a basis in previous experience.

This previous experience is in various forms. In yoga, in philosophy, we call them *samskaras* and nowadays in the modern world they say, "Ah, karma, that is his karma." In modern philosophy and yoga philosophy they are known as archetypes. Your previous experiences, the thousands and millions and trillions of them are based in you in the form of archetypes. They are in such number you can't imagine it. The totality of these archetypes is called karma. This is responsible for incarnation. This is responsible for your destiny and this is the basis for evolution, and you have to stop it. You have to stop this process. Then only the involution process will start; not going forth but coming back, not outside but inside.

The *Gita* gives very clear instructions on this point. The *Gita* says "You can't get out of action, you can't renounce life,

you can't renounce karma." Even if you renounce external karma, the mental karmas will continue. Just walking is not karma. Just typing is not karma. Going to a shop or working in the kitchen is not karma. When you are desiring it is also karma. Karma is a kind of movement that is taking place within you, maybe in the body, maybe in the mind, maybe in the emotions. Therefore, not even for a single moment can man remain without action, either physical, mental, emotional or on some other level of his being which we do not observe.

The binding power of karma

If that is the truth, then how to transcend the karma? No, karma is deeply rooted within one's quality of relationship with the object, with the person or with the event. For example, I have a maid servant. She is working with my family, she looks after my brother, sister and children. She is a very good servant, she loves everybody, she serves everybody day and night. When my brother, sister or children fall ill she keeps awake at night and is very anxious to see them well.

One day she receives a telegram from her town. The telegram says her son is not well. It disturbs her completely, she goes completely out of gear. That is karma. She is working with my family: that is not karma, it is *akarma*. Do you understand *akarma*? Inaction is *akarma*. She is not working with her son, she goes there maybe once in a year during Easter or Christmas, but that has disturbed her.

When something in life disturbs you, that is karma. When love does not disturb you, when success does not disturb you and failures do not disturb you, when happiness does not disturb you, that means you have no karma. That has to be achieved first, then meditation will bloom, then you don't have to learn meditation from me – close your eyes and evolution begins.

The problem is not that you can't meditate, the problem is not because your guru is not teaching you the right meditation, the problem is the quality of yourself. You are erecting a mansion without a foundation, or you are making

nice dishes without salt, or dessert without sugar. What is very important in this particular respect is to understand that you are trying to go in, but you have kept yourself bound to a post. In India, as an example, we have a very primitive, conventional method of making sugarcane juice. One pair of bullocks go on rotating a machine which squeezes the sugarcane juice and they do it day and night. During the eight or twelve hours they must walk at least fifty miles, but they still move no further. That is exactly what is happening in our meditation, because we are rotating there and not going beyond.

Vairagya: understanding and disidentification

We should break the cord we are afraid of. "Oh, I will have to renounce desires. My God, I will have to renounce passions and love. Oh no, it's not possible." That is our fear because we don't understand. There is no renunciation in it. There is only a process of understanding and disidentification. Yoga calls that particular spirit *vairagya*; not dispassion, not detachment, not renunciation. It is exactly the spirit with which the maidservant is working sincerely with my family.

I had a disciple. He was a treasurer in a bank. One morning he went to the bank to find that it had been looted during the night; he came back, that's all. After some time he lost twenty-five rupees from his own pocket and went to pieces completely. That is because of the duality of association, because with that twenty-five rupees there was the seal 'mine'. When the thousands went from the bank there was no seal 'mine'. These are very subtle things in our personality which deal with our karma.

I know that everybody has the capacity to disidentify. When you love a boy, he is yours. When you love a girl, she is yours, but after some time, if he or she is not according to your wishes, they are not yours. How quickly disidentification has taken place. The quality of *vairagya* is present in everyone. However, we still are not able to do it because we are afraid. We have some sort of fear within us, but I can

assure you of one thing and you may believe it: the quality of happiness and satisfaction is greater with vairagya.

If nothing can disturb your mind, don't you believe the quality of happiness is greater? Success makes you happy, then failure makes you unhappy so the happiness is gone, but if you can continue the same happiness in spite of failure, the happiness will be greater, the happiness will be enduring, therefore the *Gita* says you must live with the spirit of karma yoga.

Life: expressing the karma

Karma yoga is not just a charitable act. Karma yoga is an act which you do with complete awareness, through which your mind, your soul and self will be purified. Why should I marry? Why should I have children, why should I work, why should I earn money? Because that is a process for fixing my karma. It is a process for fixing the passions, fixing the insecurities and fixing the greed. The various stages which you are undergoing in your life are nothing but a way to work out your own karma, to do away with the karma.

A joke: if you take a purgative pill, what will happen? You go to the toilet ten times, fifteen times, twenty times; everything will come out. So there has to be some catalyst, there has to be something which should excite the karma. Passion is karma. Anger is karma. Jealousy and greed are karma. I am only giving you some examples, there is a big list of karma. How are you going to get this karma out of you? Or are you going into the grave with this karma? Or will you attain samadhi with this karma? Go into samadhi with passions, greed and everything? No, you have to throw them into the toilet.

Take a purgative pill. The wife is that, the husband is that, these good and bad and naughty children are that, this good friend, that wretched friend, this hopeless friend, that idiot is the purgative pill. This has to be your attitude in life, then passion is not passion, then nothing is maya, then nothing is worldly. Why did I marry? To transcend passion.

Why am I amassing wealth? To transcend greed. That is how the life of the householder is designed. In India they used to call the life of a householder *grihastha ashram*. A yoga ashram is a place where you practise yoga; grihastha ashrama is a place where you practise life.

Nirvana samadhi: knowledge of the self

By pursuing the life of a householder correctly you will be able to accomplish success in karma yoga, then your meditation will lead you to samadhi without doubt. Even as a man, when he is absolutely tired, does not need a technique to sleep, even as a man who is hungry for days together does not have to search for taste, in the same way, a man who has achieved the proper frame of karma yoga in his life does not need anything for meditation; when he closes his mind, he knows himself.

Many thousands of years ago in India, the rishis said, “Know the self.” Then came Buddha who said, “Attain nirvana within yourself.” After that there came another wise man in this country who also said the same thing, “Know thyself.” Since then there have been many gurus throughout the world who have been saying the same thing – “Know thyself.”

I have made it a point to tell people that the practices of yoga initiate a process of involution in you, but yoga is not just raja yoga. Is the wall the house, is the roof the house, is the floor the house, is the window the house or is the foundation the house? Tell me, what is the house? What is yoga? Karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga, hatha yoga, kundalini yoga, kriya yoga, laya yoga, mantra yoga, etc. All these are different faculties of yoga which you must practise accordingly from time to time and you should practise them steadily.

If your emotions are powerful, practise bhakti yoga. If you are not able to transcend attachment and passions practise karma yoga. If your mind is undisciplined practise raja yoga. If you lack intellectual clarity practise jnana yoga. If you want to awaken your kundalini, practise laya yoga, kriya yoga, kundalini yoga and mantra yoga.

28

Know Thyself

Hotel Holiday Inn, Athens, 3 May 1984

During the last few decades the world has been talking about yoga, and different nationalities and religions have tried to form an opinion about it. In olden days yoga was used to improve and develop the inner spirit of man. Our ancestors believed that, without the enlightenment of consciousness, a human being could not improve and therefore it was very necessary that everyone should know their own self. However, in modern times our generation at first didn't understand yoga at all. They thought that yoga was almost a cult of heretics or some thought yoga was a sect of puritans.

When the scientists started probing into it they found that yoga can improve the health of the body. In many countries teams of scientists began to investigate yoga scientifically. They finally came to the conclusion that yoga could become a means of therapy. In the United States they conducted many experiments on the effects of yoga on the body and mind. The results, though not conclusive, are definitely very positive.

The quest for reality

In the meantime, while yoga was being resurrected by the scientists, spiritually minded people all over the world began to ask, "Can yoga help our spiritual practices?" For

thousands of years we have been told that there are bodies after bodies, and behind the body is a spiritual self, or there is a transcendental reality. Very few people could have a glimpse of that experience. Most people could only talk about it, they didn't get any experience, they didn't even know how to start. They began to question if, through yoga, it is possible to experience the higher, sublime and transcendental horizons of our being. It has been the philosophical quest of all religions and of all civilizations from time to time. A question comes before them. What, after all, is reality?

Except a section of materialists, almost everybody is trying to understand or discover reality. "Is the body ultimate and is the body my definition? The mind, the emotions, the ego, the thoughts – am I that or am I something more than that?" This is just one side of questioning. There is another side and that is called the philosophical quest for reality in the form of divinity. What is divinity? What are these divinities and deities? Many thousands of years ago in India this subject was discussed openly. The questions were discussed for many thousands of years. Finally, they came to one conclusion: "Know your self and you will know everything."

After this great philosophical movement a great man came in India, 2,600 years ago. Everyone knows him by the name of Buddha. He spoke about nirvana. Nirvana is a state where the mind jumps over the mind. A state of mind which is beyond intellect and all kinds of mental functions.

Exoteric yoga: dealing with social problems

It is true that through the practices of yoga you can attain physical health. Throughout the world, in hospitals, drug rehabilitation centres, mental hospitals and prisons, yoga is being taught for the welfare of humanity, but that is not the aim of yoga. Yoga therapy is a by-product, mental peace and relaxation are by-products, a disciplined life is a by-product, it cannot and should not be the ultimate aim of yoga.

Our generation is suffering from infirmity of understanding. It talks about spiritual things, but it is rooted in matter; we are rooted in matter and sensuality; we are rooted in the mind. It was precisely because of this that the psychology of Freud could become international. Only a civilization which is suffering from poverty of intellect can talk about Freudian psychology. Unless your culture has gone down you can't talk about it. Can sensuality give you happiness? Do you believe it? Oh, you may believe in sensuality, because we are all sensualists, but sensuality cannot give health or peace of mind, sensuality cannot give normal human behaviour. If you talk about treating your mind by sensual methods you are going from darkness to death. Unless a culture is perverted and misguided, unless a culture has become absolutely idiotic, it cannot accept that sensuality can be a road to enlightenment and better health.

It is because of this background that today we teach yoga to everybody for physical and mental health because our culture is suffering from hypertension, stress and anxiety. In order to bring this culture to a point of resilience, to a point of tranquillity and one-pointedness, we have to drag the people to yoga. Two forms of yoga have been accepted all the time: exoteric and esoteric. The exoteric forms of yoga are related to this physical body, to this mind and to the emotions, but exoteric yoga is only a stepping-stone. If you need it you should practise it, but the esoteric practices of yoga are more important because, in the basic philosophy of yoga, it is said that if you can handle your consciousness, if you can handle your ego, if you can handle experiences, then you can handle your body as well, because this is not the only body.

Esoteric yoga: the ten subtle bodies, seven stages of consciousness

In the esoteric science of yoga there are basically and primarily three bodies: the gross, the causal and the astral. These three are further divided into ten bodies. To consider

this body to be ultimate is, therefore, a philosophical error. During one's lifetime of fifty or eighty years, one should try to realize the greater, deeper and finer bodies. In order to realize these, it is important to have what we call the proper frame of mind.

In yogic philosophy we talk about the seven stages of consciousness which relate to seven final, ascending states of mind. If you like you can compare them to seven heavens, it's up to you, but these seven stages of mind are inherent in you, not outside. You have to know how to transcend one state of mind and go on to another, and again transcend that and go on to the third and finally reach the seventh. The yoga which is known as kundalini yoga talks about the ascending states and ascending behaviour of consciousness.

You must also understand that there are two forms of consciousness: one manifested, the other unmanifested. Manifested consciousness is in the form of the mind, ego and emotions. It is through this manifested consciousness that you have cognition, but this is not the only consciousness, it is something like the tip of the iceberg. Within an iceberg a little bit is seen above and the rest is not seen at all. This unmanifested consciousness is known as *purusha* in yoga, it was also spoken of as the self. When the Upanishads, Buddha and Socrates told us to know the self, they wanted us to know this unmanifested consciousness.

Techniques to experience the unmanifested consciousness

In the science of yoga and tantra this is known by many names. Religious minded people call this unmanifested consciousness divinity, the yogis call it shakti or kundalini shakti. This kundalini shakti is based at the root of the spine. It is lying dormant, as if sleeping, and the purpose of every yogi, the purpose of every human being, should be to awaken this shakti, the primal or original power which indicates the future evolution of mankind or of life on this planet. All that we feel inside, all that we can see inside, all

the visions we have within us are produced by shakti, but how to awaken this shakti?

For thousands of years people tried various methods. In India, during the period of the Vedas, thousands of years ago, they tried a drink called soma. With the help of this, or similar drinks, they got very high, but when they found it was detrimental to the real and true experience it was withdrawn and banned. They tried many types of herbs which our generation is trying today. However, our generation is not trying them with a spiritual purpose, but in order to escape from the realities. Then they tried all kinds of funny matters in order to awaken this kundalini shakti. They experimented with austerity and fasting, they experienced *brahmacharya*, celibacy, they experienced sensuality and sexuality, they tried alcohol, wine and women. They tried boosting the degree of fear in burial grounds. Thousands and thousands of methods were tried in India because we believe that the purpose of human life is to realize the higher consciousness.

Five methods of realizing higher consciousness

Everything else in life is unimportant; nothing in life is important. Man is part of a macrocosmic movement, or a macrocosmic theatre, and when we are an actor in this macrocosmic theatre we must play our part well. We believe that human life is a link in the long, long chain of evolution. So, all sorts of experiments were tried and finally a conclusion was reached. They said, that in order to awaken this shakti there can be five methods.

Method number one is to be born as a yogi, of yogic parents. Of course you know all of you have missed that bus, but definitely you can be the instrument of giving birth to yogic children. Is it not possible to be instruments of a higher consciousness? How can you produce such a child, who has a yogic mind and a raised consciousness and transcendental awareness? It is possible. If in the United States the mothers could produce millions of hippie children, in Greece mothers can produce millions of yogic children. When certain

countries in your generation can produce millions of drug addicts, they can also produce yogis. What is important is to change the quality of your genetics. If you practise yoga, you can bring forth yogic children.

The second method of awakening the kundalini is by the use of mantra. This mantra is sound energy, it is a part of the cosmic energy. When you produce a sound, when you produce a mantra, this mantra creates an action, it creates a vibration, a rhythm within your own self. If the mantra can be obtained from your guru, then it can work very powerfully.

The third method of awakening the kundalini is austerity, penance and tapasya. You must live a life through which the toxins of the body, the mind and the emotions are burnt completely. The body accumulates toxins, you know it very well. These poisonous matters are created by imbalance in catabolic and anabolic processes. Toxins are created in the mind also. We do not know how to dispose of a thought, an emotion or an idea, even if we don't like it, and that remains in the mind in the form of toxin. Physical toxins create physical disease and mental toxins create mental disease. Through the practices of austerity these toxins are burnt.

The fourth method concerns herbs. You should not misunderstand and think that I am talking about marijuana, heroin and cocaine. These herbs are known as only to the tantric gurus and they are handed over from guru to his qualified or trusted disciple.

The fifth method concerns the practices of concentration. The aspirant has to accept, from the guru, some method for eliminating the mental activities. When samadhi is experienced the awakening of kundalini takes place. It could take place by other methods as well, but the techniques through which you attain samadhi are considered the best and most favourable techniques. What is samadhi? Samadhi is a higher state where the mind switches off. During the period of samadhi this mind does not function and the individual ego hibernates.

Two methods for achieving samadhi

One method of achieving samadhi is through the systematic practise of hatha yoga, starting with the body and gradually going deeper into the mind and the self. Through the practices of pranayama, mudras and bandhas, the breath and the mind are both suspended. The practitioner practices pranayama for a long time, according to the rules and conditions, and synchronizes the pranayama, mantra and also the *bandhas*, the three locks in the body.

When the breath is retained and the bandhas are held, then the kundalini in the base centre becomes restless, the central nerve becomes operative. This is the attainment of samadhi through hatha yoga, but when you awaken kundalini and attain samadhi through hatha yoga it is not sure that it will stay. Even after awakening the kundalini through the practices of hatha yoga, through the achievement of samadhi, there can again be a downfall in spiritual life.

There is another method of awakening kundalini called the method of raja yoga. Raja yoga is a system which improves the quality of the mind by concentration and meditation. Through the practices of raja yoga, the mind, the object and the senses are separated. How does cognition take place? You know very well. If there is no mind, or if the mind is not associated with the senses, cognition will not take place. The first thing you have to do in order to stop the flow of cognition, in order to stop the flow of external experiences, mundane experiences, is to create a partition, a division or separation between the mind and the senses.

Pratyahara: the fifth stage of raja yoga and the first in esoteric yoga

Raja yoga has eight steps. Discipline is the first step. Regularity is the second. Firm posture is the third step. Practice of pranayama is the fourth step. Separation of the senses and the mind is the fifth step, and this practice in raja yoga is known as *pratyahara*.

When the senses do not carry the impulses to the brain, that is pratyahara. When the five indriyas are benumbed, are paralyzed, invalidated and the mind does not receive the necessary stimulus from outside, that is pratyahara. That means the mind is isolated. This is the first step in esoteric yoga and the fifth in raja yoga, please remember it. If you are able to isolate your mind from the sense impressions, you have started yoga.

The problem of how to isolate the mind comes because there is an unholy alliance between the mind and the senses. For incarnations the mind and the senses have lived together. When you isolate the mind from the senses it becomes restless, therefore there are certain yogic practices for isolation of the mind. After you practise these, then you go to the second stage.

Dharana: concentration, the second stage of esoteric yoga

Nowadays people talk about concentration, “Ha, what are you doing?” “I practise concentration every morning.” You cannot practise concentration directly. Concentration is the outcome of an isolated state of mind. You concentrate on a candle flame, on a symbol, on Christ or you concentrate on me or your guru. The mind runs out. You bring it back again, again it goes away, again you are pulling it. Oh, this is bad wrestling! This indicates that you have not gone through the process of total isolation.

If you did not go through the primary school or middle school and jumped into high school, what would happen? You would fail in one of the subjects. Don’t worry about concentration, it will come by itself. Don’t worry about sleep, when you are tired it will come. When the body is tired you sleep automatically, spontaneously. Does the man who is tired need sleeping pills? Work in the garden, work physically the whole day and you will see that you forget sleeping pills completely.

So, you must practise pratyahara first. It is not possible for me to tell you what the practices of pratyahara are here

because I have limited time, but in raja yoga there are many practices for pratyahara. One of these is kirtan, singing a few sounds, a rhythm for one hour or half an hour. Another practice of pratyahara is nada yoga, discovering the sounds inside you.

When the pratyahara is achieved you start concentration. You are trying to focus your mind on one object, it can be external and internal. Where concentration ends and meditation begins, nobody can tell you. Concentration and meditation are both almost a continuity. Concentration, meditation and samadhi, these are the three important faculties which one must have for awakening kundalini.

Tantric techniques

In kundalini yoga there is another system and that system is the tantric system. Please understand that when I say tantra I don't mean anything vulgar. I do not mean anything irreligious. There is a very ancient science known as tantra and it has given us a science known as kriya yoga. This kriya system is not exactly the system of raja yoga, it is an entirely independent system based on certain realities of human nature and body. The kriya yoga system is based on acquiring knowledge of the deeper parts of the body. I will just give you one example.

In tantra they say that at the top of the head there is a centre. This centre is known as *visarga*, the falling of the drop. That is the centre where a very little amount of secretion or fluid is produced. This fluid is deposited in a small place in cranial passage in the brain. This particular centre is connected with the upper side of the epiglottis. So, in kriya yoga, you are told to turn your tongue and slowly insert it into the upper palate.

In the course of about a year or two the tongue becomes flexible and it enters into the nasal orifice. There comes a time when this tip of the tongue is able to stimulate, able to excite that particular nerve centre which is connected to this higher centre of the brain. When that moment comes, that

is to say, when the tip of the tongue is able to operate the centre, then that centre in the brain begins to secrete fluid down into the body.

That secretion is known in tantra as amrit. *Amrit* means 'nectar' or 'ambrosia'. When this secretion gets mixed in the body, then the feeling in the mind changes. You begin to see visions and colours, you begin to experience inner sounds and the thoughts begin to stop. Without any effort on your part, the mind begins to stop. As the result of that particular super chemical, then, wherever you are, the mind is withdrawn. Samadhi just takes place and as a result of that samadhi, awakening takes place. This is one of the techniques of kriya yoga.

There is another technique of kriya yoga. This is also very powerful. This does not need much concentration. They say that within the framework of the spine there are six psychic centres. The first centre is situated in the coccyx. The second is situated in the sacroiliac joint. The third is situated behind the navel. The fourth is behind the heart. The fifth is in the neck. The sixth is situated at the top of the spine or behind the mid-eyebrow centre.

The system of kriya yoga says that according to your evolution or incarnation, one of these centres is developed in you. All human beings have sensitivity in one of these six centres, you can try one, or all of them, one by one. For a few months you can concentrate on one centre, then go to the second, then the third. Try all six and you will be able to know which is your centre.

The awakening of kundalini

When the awakening of kundalini takes place, the human being moves from matter to consciousness. Unless you move from matter you can't understand the self, because the self which the Upanishads, Buddha and Socrates talked about is not a subject of the mind. You cannot understand the self, you cannot realize the self, you cannot experience the self through the mind – never, because the mind is finite and the

self is not finite. The self is infinite, is absolute. The self is perfect and homogeneous. How can this mind realize that? Therefore, in order to experience the totality of your self, the first thing you will have to do is to jump over the mind.

You cannot transcend the mind by marijuana or through sexual yoga. You cannot transcend the mind even by religion. Mind is a combination of twenty-six elements. Mind is not thought, mind is not emotion, mind is not memory. Mind is a form of prakriti, mind is a form of nature and in order to transcend the mind you have to use the correct and proper methods.

When awakening of kundalini takes place, there comes a vision. That vision is followed by many other visions. The first experience of kundalini is not ultimate. This is only one experience and that experience will be followed by various experiences, therefore what I am trying to tell you here is that yoga should be used for the experience of one's self. We should not lose sight of that.

This country has a great philosophical heritage and here people can understand something more than material philosophy. Philosophy is ingrained in your veins and blood. You should practise yoga for the body and mind, but it is important that you remember that yoga should be practised for the awakening of that primordial power. When you know the self, you know the mind, you know the body, you know the universe.

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Satsang

Satyanandashram, Kypseli, Athens, 4 May 1984

What does it mean to take responsibility?

Well, the question is not very clear, but still I will try. Everybody has a type of karma. This karma produces a destiny for him. According to this destiny he has emotions, passions and desires. In order to fulfil those inner desires he formulates a family, a community or a social structure for himself. In the framework of that society and community he has to fulfil certain obligations. If he fulfils those obligations then he fulfils his own desires, emotions and passions. If he does not fulfil the obligations of that family or society or community he cannot fulfil his emotions, passions and desires.

Therefore, responsibility has two phases. Social responsibility is of one type and the other form of responsibility is spiritual responsibility. That means in this life you have a spiritual responsibility also to fulfil.

Most of us are aware of only one form of responsibility. For example, we think, "I have a wife and children and family, and I have to look after them. This is my responsibility." This is how most of us feel. "My son is ill, my daughter is ill, or my father is ill, I have to educate my child." Well this is all we know about responsibility. This is what we call social responsibility.

This social responsibility can be a stepping stone to spiritual life because, by fulfilling this social responsibility, we

are fulfilling our emotions, passions and desires, but usually it doesn't happen. We get caught in our social responsibilities and do not work for spiritual life. We get so deep in these social responsibilities that we become completely unaware of the spiritual side. When we are only aware of our social responsibility and do not understand its spiritual purpose, then corruption creeps into our life.

There is another form of responsibility which people do not know. That is your responsibility for your spiritual evolution. Rearing a family and running a home, that alone is not your responsibility. You have a responsibility towards your own self too. Therefore, side by side with your worldly responsibilities, you should also become aware of your spiritual responsibilities.

We do not really feel as strongly about our responsibility for our spiritual growth as we do about family and children. Our involvements with spiritual life are very casual and we don't even feel that they are compulsory or obligatory. When your son is to be educated or one of your family members is to be operated upon, how deeply you feel your obligations. Even if you have no time or money still you try, but you do not feel that for your spiritual life. You always feel casual about it as though spiritual life is a pastime or luxury. This is why the socialistic philosophies have criticised us. They say that spiritual life is a luxury of the people; they don't think that it is so necessary for us.

So, there are two forms of responsibility before us and these two types of responsibility must be blended together. Your worldly responsibility must become a stepping stone to your spiritual life, or I may say that your worldly responsibilities must be aimed for the fulfilment of your spiritual responsibility.

Is it necessary to have a personal guru in order to follow the path of yoga and if so, what is the relationship between the guru and disciple? How does that relationship function?

I will answer this question in brief, but I have produced a book in English on the guru and disciple relationship. The ashram will have it translated into Greek and sooner or later

you should try to obtain a copy of that book. It deals with all aspects of the guru and disciple relationship.

When you want to practise the exoteric or the preliminary forms of yoga, then a guru is not necessary; then you need an expert teacher. The expert teacher is known as an *acharya*. If you want to practise hatha yoga, you must have an acharya, or an expert teacher, but when you want to go deep into your own consciousness, then you must have a guru.

Just as a doctor or a surgeon knows about the body, the guru knows about the self. If you go to a person who is not a surgeon for an operation, you know what can happen to you. In the same way, if you go to a person who does not know about the self, you know what can happen to you.

You know the body has its own dimensions. In the same way the mind has its dimensions and in the same way, the self also has its dimensions. Guru knows about the functions, behaviour and characteristics of the mind, and at the same time he can understand the level of his disciple. There cannot be a general way because each disciple is slightly different from the other. Of course, all of you are Greeks, or half of you are men and half of you women, but that is merely the definition of your nationality and sex.

On the mental plane you are slightly different from one another, because the mind is controlled by three forces which are known as gunas. *Guna* means 'attribute', 'quality' or 'property'. These three gunas are the *tamo guna*, *rajo guna* and *sattwa guna* which mean 'inertia,' 'activity' and 'harmony'.

Many people are very lazy. They always procrastinate, sleep too much, think too much and do nothing. They are like self-complacent pigs. They are called *tamo guni*. These people who are predominantly *tamo guni*, the guru has to take them from that point of evolution.

Then there are people who are always active, hyperactive, dynamic and aggressive. They desire to achieve and work like madmen day and night. They are always dreaming of achievements. They never can sit quiet. These people will always have ups and downs in the mind, whereas the *tamo*

guni has no ups and downs; he doesn't have tension, blood pressure, heartache.

The tamo guni is always lazy, but the rajasic man will always have stress problems. The guru has to choose another form of practice for him. If the practices for a rajo guni are given to a person who is tamo guni, then there will be disaster for him. In the same way, if the practices good for a tamo guni are prescribed for a rajo guni, there will be no result.

Then there are people who are sattwa guni: harmonious and balanced. They maintain a balance between the negative and the positive results of their life. Their mind is always in a state of balance. Of course, these people are very few.

Many times a sattwic person and a tamasic person look alike, because their external performance, their external reaction, their external personality looks alike. Unless these two, the tamasic and sattwic person, are exposed to a guru, they can't be known.

According to these three qualities of the mind there are five stages of one's evolution. These five stages of evolution are related to a combination because nobody is totally tamasic and nobody is totally rajasic or sattwic. We are a combination. Some of us are predominantly tamasic and a little bit of both the others. Some of us are predominantly rajasic or predominantly sattwic, with the elements of the other two gunas intermixed.

So, according to this combination, there are five stages. The lowest possible stage is called a totally and absolutely dull state of mind. This dull state of mind has neither spiritual aspirations nor worldly ambitions. He does not want enlightenment. He does not want prosperity. He does not want anything. He just lives like a vegetable. This is the primitive state of mind.

Then the second rung of evolution is the scattered state of mind. In this state of mind he is dissipated, he is something like a monkey. If you give a piece of cloth to a monkey he will work on that cloth for about five minutes or ten minutes and then completely forget it. His mind is waxing and waning. Have you seen your children doing this? They take one thing, they fight for it, they demand it, they

play with it for some time and then completely forget it. This is the second rung in the evolution of mind.

The third state of mind is called the oscillating mind. The oscillation of the mind is like a pendulum. It goes and comes back to the same point. Then higher than that is one-pointed mind and the final state of mind is when it is under proper control.

These are the diverse stages of the human mind of the disciple. Unless you are exposed to a guru, nothing can be done in spiritual life, but then there are many other things regarding the guru and disciple relationship because there are many types of gurus. There are yogi gurus, jnani gurus, tantric gurus and all of them have expertise in one of those fields. According to your qualification, or according to your nature, you must get that type of guru.

There is a strong wish to experience the universe, to dissolve in God and until then, I need help to play the correct role which is meant for me in the general plan and also help my family. How can I achieve this? I ask to be accepted by you.

Life in the world and in the family is a stage where we develop our spiritual consciousness. In other words, I should say that this life is like a university or like a school. The circumstances in life created by your emotions, passions and desires teach something very important. When you relate with your life through emotions, passions and desires, then you begin to know more and more about life. By going through the process of passions, emotions and desires you know more about yourself and more about the reality of existence. Even if one is an out and out sensual person, still through that sensuality you know more about your life and existence.

The universe is an extension of yourself. We call it the microcosmos and macrocosmos. The microcosmos is you and me and my self. The macrocosmos is the whole planet, the whole galaxy, the whole group of solar systems. The macrocosmos can be measured in light years, but

this microcosmos can be fathomed in meditation. The macrocosmos and microcosmos are identical. You are a miniature creation. You are a miniature universe.

I am not talking about a philosophy, I am talking about a scientific truth. It is not just a myth. In modern physics they have done a lot of work on it. Of course I don't want to go into detail about it. They have seen the behaviour in the universe and they have analyzed the behaviour of electrons, protons and atoms, and they have tried to understand it. They have found that the behaviours there are identical to each other: the sun, moon, planets and intra-molecular space are exactly in the same pattern.

Therefore, you are a miniature universe which means you have a sun, a moon, planets, constellations, space and galaxies. Therefore, in order to understand the universe, it is advised that you should try to understand yourself, but this understanding of the inner universe or microcosmic universe must be blended with the universal plan. This life is a part of the universal plan.

Suffering and grief, happiness and joy, failure, delay, loss and death, success and gain, name and fame, passions, emotions, greed, anger and violence, jealousy, hatred – they are part of the universal plan. You should not wish to live a life without these. You don't want death, you don't want grief, you don't want failure, hatred, greed, violence – you want love, happiness, prosperity, good health. You are accepting only half the universe. That is why nobody is going further. You are not knowing the universe.

You go to God. What do you ask from him? Let my son die? You don't ask this. You can't think of the whole universe. The great energy, the supreme energy of the universe is manifesting itself in all forms. The energy is manifesting itself in the form of death and birth, anger and passion, hunger and thirst, greed and violence, compassion and charity. You have chosen only one part of it and you don't want the rest. Therefore, those people who search only for happiness, experience unhappiness. Those who don't want

hatred, they get hatred. Those who want only love, they don't get it and those who hate death, they get only death.

Knowledge of the whole universe is very difficult to obtain. Within you is a very small point of experience. That little point of experience is a luminous point which comes at the height of meditation, which comes like a steady star. It is not like a sunball. It is not like a fireball. It is so tiny that you have to see it with great attention. Sometimes it is there, but you don't see it and you have to maintain your awareness on the point for a long time without missing it, then you enter into a state of knowledge of the universe.

This point which I am talking about is the nucleus. You know what the nucleus is? The nucleus is used to produce nuclear bombs. The centre of matter is the nucleus. The centre of consciousness is the nucleus. Therefore in order to know the universe you have to go to the centre of yourself, so you must try to find out where your centre is.

What should I do in order to achieve peace of mind? I am a lawyer and continually receive negative vibrations. Is my profession and family an obstacle to becoming your disciple?

In order to acquire a greater amount of peace of mind and happiness in life, one has to discipline one's life. Discipline is not a rigor, it is not a penance. According to one's situation, one should plan one's whole life. Some time should be devoted to the practices of yoga, some time should be devoted to your own profession, some time should be devoted to reflection and contemplation, and some time should be devoted to taking care of the family.

When you are able to make a proper program for your life, then you feel better, but at the same time you remember that happiness and unhappiness keep coming to everybody in succession. Sometimes the experiences are objective and sometimes they are subjective. Therefore, it is necessary that one must practise one's life with greater patience.

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Satsang

Satyananda Ashram, Kypseli, Athens, 4 May 1984

In your life you had many opportunities and ways to approach or to be 'That'. Is there a way, any hope or grace to get there directly which is outside rules and words?

Man is subjected to laws of evolution. The law of evolution is obligatory for each and every speck of this creation. Therefore, in order to reach the higher consciousness or higher stages of life, one has to fulfil necessary rules or conditions of evolution. For example, there is a certain law of gravity with human destiny. That is known as maya. It is a force which binds everybody to this lower existence. If you are not able to go beyond maya you have to remain bound to this lower existence.

In order to overcome the force of maya, you need an extra force in your life. This extra force is known as *vidya* or higher experience. When you throw a stone high up, it again comes down to the centre of gravity, but if you give speed to this stone, throw it much higher than you did before, then this stone can penetrate much deeper into space. In the same way, in spiritual life there are certain elements which one has to adopt to overcome the gravitational force of maya.

Another important thing which you will have to learn is that maya operates through the mind. When the mind is

clogged by ignorance, maya has a greater effect on you. Most of us are full of *avidya* or ignorance so this force of maya is able to influence us through our minds, therefore we are not able to have higher experience. With the help of the mind, maya imposes lower instincts in our life. You know that we have many lower instincts.

There are three things you must understand: instinct, intellect and intuition. Instinct controls animals. All animals creatures behave, live and act through instinct. In human life there is a predominance of intellect, but at the same time we have instincts also. Therefore, in a human incarnation, we are partly controlled by instincts and partly controlled by the intellect, but with the practices of yoga you can operate through intuition directly. Higher human beings operate through intuition. Human beings operate through intellect. Animals operate through instinct.

What are the instincts? Acquiring food is one form of instinct, because it is the instinct of self-preservation. Progeny or the sexual act is another instinct in animals, because it is necessary for propagation and pleasure. The third instinct is sleep and the fourth instinct is what we call fear or insecurity. These four instincts are predominant in every animal, but animals do not know that they have them because they do not have intellect.

Human beings also have these four, but at the same time they have intellect. Therefore, it is very necessary, if you want to make maya ineffective, to transcend your instincts bit by bit. It is very difficult, I tell you, it is very difficult to transcend instinct, but if you want to go high you will have to do something because the force of maya operates through the mind. Therefore, in spiritual life there are a few supports. First is the support of guru, second is the support of satsang, the third support is *swadhyaya*, self-study.

Guru is the primary support. *Satsang* means association with good ideas. When you listen to good ideas it helps you. You may not be able to put those good ideas into practice, but they will definitely inspire and help you. When you

expose yourself to satsang, you are improving the vibration of your personality, and when you are exposing yourself to satsang you are creating, or initiating into yourself a process of self-analysis. The third support is swadhyaya. Swadhyaya is a process of reading and studying the books which relate to spiritual life. When you read and study these books I have spoken about, then it gives you a lot of aspiration.

When you want to heat milk you keep it near the fire. If the fire goes off, what will happen? The milk will go cold. If you want the milk to be heated, again you will have to put it on the fire. If you want to maintain the temperature of the milk, you'll have to maintain the temperature of the fire. In the same way, if you want to maintain your spiritual temperature, then you will need these three types of support.

How can we achieve humility? What is the quality of humility?

When the clouds are full with water they come closer to the earth. When the trees are full with fruits the branches swing low. Those people who have outstanding qualities become humble, but those people who do not have those qualities, pose as though they have them. They become egoistic and arrogant. They make a show of their qualities. This is the tendency of most people.

In fact, if you analyze the whole affair psychologically, you will find that real humility comes through the understanding of one's negative personality. When we look within our own self impartially, when we try to judge ourselves impartially, then we see our qualities and see what we do not have. Therefore, in order to achieve humility, one has to judge one's own self mercilessly.

If one wants to succeed in this life and also in spiritual life, then one will have to see one's own personality thoroughly. No man is perfect, and no man is united in himself. Everybody has a duplicate personality, not only with others, but even with himself.

Can you make a confession about yourself to yourself? No, you can't. You can't confess about yourself to yourself because, first of all, you don't know about yourself. "I am a very good man," that's what you know. "I am a very wise man," that's all you know about yourself. "I am a very strong man; I am a very capable man," that's what you think about yourself.

When you fantasize, what do you fantasize? When you imagine or when you build castles in the air, what do you do? You become a great man there, you become the richest man there, you become the most powerful man there, but do you know that is not yourself? You are just a limited human being and you have many traits of imperfection.

Even a boy who is in primary school should know his limitations. They are his intellectual limitations. He should not make fun of a professor who teaches at a university. This is precisely the reason we quarrel in the family. This is precisely the reason we quarrel in the market place, because you think you are right and I think I am right, but the fact is both are wrong because if one of us was right, the quarrel would not have started.

I'll tell you a joke related to two drivers in Japan. Two drivers were driving in opposite directions. Suddenly, at a U-turn they collided with each other. It was not a great accident, but it happened. Both of them came from behind the steering wheel and greeted each other. One said, "I am sorry, it was my mistake." The other driver said, "No, not at all, it was my mistake." He said, "No, it was my mistake." That was their quarrel.

Both of them had to report to the police. When they went to the police, one driver reported, "I made a mistake, I was at the wrong side and I collided with this car," and the other driver also put in the same type of report. The policeman said, "What am I going to do?" One of the drivers said, "Please tell me what fine I should pay?"

When there is understanding of oneself, then comes humility. Humility is not a cowardly nature. A coward also looks very humble, but humility is a very dynamic nature

in man. It is not the nature of British people. If there are British people, please don't mind it. British people will say, "Sorry," and then the other man will say, "Sorry," but when they go to the court, their lawyers will attack each other and each one will defend himself. That is the British way. That's not humility. That is the diplomacy of humility.

Humility is having a nature in which you try to understand your mistake in relation to the other person. Well, we don't have to talk about Japanese drivers, let us talk about husband and wife, parents and children, the boss and the subordinate. There is a crisis in humility. The wife is trying to say that the husband is wrong, and the husband is trying to prove that she is wrong. If they go to their mother-in-law and father-in-law, they are trying to press their own argument. Then what happens, you know. The quarrel multiplies, amplifies. If one of them would withdraw, it would be painful in the beginning, but at the end it would pay very substantial rewards in the form of happiness in the family, but the ego comes in between. Sometimes the thoughts do come in the mind. At the heat of passion, nothing, but sometimes she thinks or he thinks, "Ah, it is all unnecessary, I should not have done it." They know that this is not the way to happiness, but they do not tackle the problem through humility.

If one of them or both of them could search their own selves and try to find out their own contribution to the quarrel, then they would gain humility and understanding. Therefore, humility is dead; it is dead because of your hard ego. You have your personality problems, you are suffering from inferiority, or you have the feeling of superiority, or you see a certain mistake in your husband or wife, or you become careless about each other because too much intimacy breeds contempt.

Therefore, there are definite ways of developing the virtue of humility. Start with your guru, because it is before guru that you bow your head. You have to practise humility with someone first. You can practise humility with God, but with God there is no problem because he is not there, you don't clash with him, but with guru you have to come into a

clash because he is exists and he is going to crush your ego. He used to press your head and say, "Sit down." For some time you do what he says; after some time, you begin to raise your ego a little bit, because ego does not want to be subdued by anybody. Ego is man's support in life and therefore, in order to develop humility you have to train your ego.

What is guilt and what is fear and how can they be handled?

In my opinion guilt and fear are original with man's evolution. On account of ignorance of life, nature and its functions, you develop guilt and fear. Fear is a necessary form of evolution and guilt is also. Animals have no guilt, therefore they do not find any scope for evolution. In my opinion it is necessary to have some form of guilt. When there is too much guilt it influences your behaviour and personality, but some amount of guilt is very necessary for self-enquiry and evolution. In the same way, some amount of fear is also necessary.

There are many types of fear: fear of death, fear of disease, fear of being looted and robbed, fear of being criticized, fear of becoming ugly, fear of losing name and fame, fear of being defeated or suppressed. All these fears necessarily make you more capable and more thoughtful. Therefore, fear should be considered to be a very important element in your evolution.

If I made you fearless today, you know what would happen? You know what would happen? You would have an accident! You see, you have to understand the role of fear and guilt in the evolution of your consciousness, your personality and your life. Sometimes you suffer from extra guilt and sometimes you have a lot of phobias; you afraid for no reason. Then that becomes what we call an abnormal trait of your personality. Excessive fear and excessive guilt must be treated properly.

This excessive fear and excessive guilt is reflected in your behaviour. Some people go to the bathroom every half an hour, and wash their hands and face. Some people keep on using cosmetics the whole day. Some people secure their rooms with locks and latches many times more than is necessary. Many

people feel this is dirty and that is dirty; I know people who apply soap in the bathroom five times and every time they rub the whole body, not because they want to look beautiful, but because they feel that there is so much dirt there. These symptoms prove that you are suffering from too much guilt and excessive fear, but it is very difficult for an ordinary person to know how much fear you must have and to draw a line of demarcation beyond which you shouldn't have fear.

According to this philosophy, fear and guilt have come with man through incarnations, but then there are other theories as well. When too much adrenalin is injected into the blood the heart has to pump the blood very fast. When the heart is pumping the blood very fast then it pumps more into the brain also. On account of this physio-hormonal process, you feel a sort of anxiety and fear. So, in modern science they say that the hormonal imbalances cause these emotions in you and you should try to maintain a balance.

Religions have their own theories. In Christianity there is the concept of eternal sin. Hinduism, Islam, Moham-medanism, Judaism – these major religions have the concept of sin. The concept of guilt should be understood in the same context. All these religions directly and indirectly believe that this sin is associated with sexual relationships. In Hinduism it is not stated straightforwardly. In Christianity it is straightforward; the affairs between Adam and Eve are the concept of original sin. In Hindu religion it is said indirectly. This is the view of religion. However, according to yoga, the definition is entirely different from this.

In yogic philosophy, fear and guilt come to everybody in the process of incarnation. Just as a child has many behaviours according to his development, in the same way the spirit, the *atman* or the self, through the course of evolution, develops many traits like fear and guilt, and finally sheds them. This means the guilt and fear will automatically go away the moment you make a transit through evolution. Just as a child is always playful, but when he makes a transition he completely forgets about his playfulness, automatically.

Therefore, according to yoga, one should not worry at all about guilt and fear because they will remain with you as long as you are in the transit lounge. As soon as you make a departure from this particular state of your existence to the next one, fear and guilt will disappear by themselves.

Why do I make the same mistakes a thousand times and why can I not avoid the same negative thoughts and the same negative emotions all the time, even though I can see that they are poisoning me?

Practise antar mouna. When you suppress your mind the same samskaras or the same thought pattern comes to you again and again. Suppose you get angry. You don't like to be angry. You regret it so much. You hate it. You are sorry for it. This is called suppression. The same thing can be said about other negative tendencies.

Most of us have a very inimical approach to our negative tendencies. When evil thoughts come into your mind you don't like it. You are so sorry about it. You feel so bad about it. You can't accept it and don't want it any more. That is called suppression. Because of suppression, these negative thoughts come into your mind, not one thousand times, but millions of times.

When a negative thought comes into your mind, let it come. Welcome it. If necessary, think it over a little more, enjoy it. It will not come after some time. It will spend itself. It may come for a day, a month or a year, but ultimately it will be spent. The force will be spent completely. When you practise your mantra, you must see that all the thoughts in your mind do come. Do not stop them. Continue the chanting of your mantra. Don't stop the mantra, but let thoughts come and go. That is the only way.

Other ways are dangerous. You suppress them one thousand times, then they will not come. You will be very happy, but they will come now in the form of repressions. When they come to you in the form of repressions you will never know about it, they come like thieves. They will come

in the form of emotional breakdowns; they will come in the form of a suicidal complex. Therefore, in my opinion, those who are having the same negative thoughts a thousand times should practise antar mouna with mantra.

Please listen to me very carefully. Sometimes people come to a meeting and they pass wind and the people who are sitting nearby close their nose. Many people pass wind, but some people pass very bad wind. Now, what are you going to do, use a cork? No, that is not the solution. Or some spray? That is not the solution. Or open the window? That is not the solution. The solution is to take him to a shankhaprakshalana class the next morning. You should know what shankhaprakshalana is. You make him pass out everything which is the cause of that wind. In the same way, when negative thoughts come to your mind, it means there is something undigested in your mind, some experience during childhood, some experience in your life. It is rotting there. You don't know about it, because when it got into you, you were only one or two years old.

When that thought, when that karma, when that influence got into your mind you did not know and you still won't be able to know it, because you do not allow the dirty, rotten matter to go out. When it is trying to come out, you stop it. When bad thoughts come into your mind, you suppress them. You have been doing it since childhood. Your mother told you to do that. Your father, your teacher, your priest told you to do that. "Don't think bad thoughts." So you are suffering.

I say differently. I tell even the little children, "When bad thoughts come into your mind, let them come! For how long will they come? They will be spent one day." However, this is a very difficult proposition I am putting before you all, because we are religious people. We want to be one with divine thoughts. We do not want to face negative thoughts.

Therefore, if you want my suggestion about your problem. You must practise what we call mental shankhaprakshalana. Do you know what mental shankhaprakshalana is? Make your mind purge out everything. Just as the body purges everything out in the toilet, in the same way, during

your mantra you must purge out that mental stuff. Doing it day after day, week after week, month after month and one day you will find that it is getting less and less.

How can one put into practise that which one believes is correct? How can one bring the gap between thoughts and actions, so that there is no disagreement between them?

It is a very good idea to put into practise what you think, but if it became possible it would be terrible in the world, because many people think destructive things. Many people think good things as well, but nature has created a system or a law, and that is what we call the gap between thought and action. This gap between thought and action is a blessing in disguise. I don't know about you, but I know about myself. If all my thoughts were put into action from the time I could think, by this time the whole world would have been destroyed ten times. And what about you? If you could put all your thoughts into action, what would happen to you?

First of all, we have to become a saint. First of all, we have to become a true yogi. First of all we should be established in wisdom and higher knowledge. When we have achieved that discipline, then this can become possible. Even then nature does not allow you. Never in history was a man born with a perfect parallel balance between thought and action. There will always be a gap between the two, but as you grow in wisdom, this gap will become shorter. So, you should not be disappointed about the reality of things.

I have spoken about it to so many people, because everywhere I go people talk about this – the gap between ideals and performances. Not only here, everywhere they say, “Why is there a gap between the ideals and performances?” My reply to them is very simple – with this gap there are so many problems in the world; if this gap is bridged the world will become an impossible place to live in, because what you are thinking – if you were able to do it? No, let nature rule this part of the law and we human beings, we ordinary human beings, must remain incompetent to some extent.

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Satsang

Satyananda Ashram, Kypseli, 5 May 1984

Should the truth always be spoken?

Some people say truth should be spoken at any time, at all costs, with everybody, but I have certain amendments to make. You should be truthful to God. You should be truthful to your guru. You should be truthful to your virtuous and righteous parents, loyal and trusted friend, but you should withhold the truth from one who is vicious and unrighteous, dishonest, hypocritical and untrustworthy. The practice of truth is bilateral and not unilateral. That is, the practice of truth should be when both parties are functioning at the same level because truth is a virtue, truth is a dharma, truth is very tender and many people who are not virtuous misuse this quality.

I will give you an example. Suppose four bad people are chasing a girl to rape her and she happens to pass through your house and after her these four people come to chase her. Will you tell the truth to them? If you tell the truth, you are patronising *adharma*, unrighteousness. If you tell the truth you are helping the vicious, monstrous and devilish nature in these people.

When you tell the truth you must know that it is not harming anybody. When you speak the truth and it harms somebody, then it is not truth. According to raja yoga, *satya*

and *ahimsa*, truth and non-violence, must go together. Many times we take pride in the truth and we speak the truth without any consideration. We speak the truth just because we have to speak it and that creates misunderstanding, destroys the career of many people and brings danger to the people. No, that is not the truth.

Truth is an eternal virtue. There is no question of challenging the greatness of truth, but when you speak the truth it should be pleasant. If it is unpleasant you should not speak it. This is what I personally think about truth.

If one does not express the truth this may be a mistake because otherwise satanic forces can overtake another person if you do not express the truth to him.

Yes, that is what I said. When you speak the truth, you must speak in such a way that it patronises dharma and not adharma. I will make it more clear. When you speak the truth you must see that it does not destroy dharma, but if your truth destroys adharma it is okay. Your truth should be helpful in destroying injustice, viciousness and unrighteousness, but you must see that you are sure about it.

Sometimes we can have prejudices. You think that it will be injustice, but it may not be because it is very difficult to decide what is dharma and what is adharma. A lot of definitions have been given by religions throughout the world. What is dharma for me may not be dharma for you. The righteousness, the virtue, the *dharma* is different according to culture, religion and the people. Therefore, it is necessary to see that law and order is not broken by speaking the truth.

Is the truth not God?

Yes, of course.

Can you speak to us about freedom of will?

Just as every tree produces seeds, in the same way, every action you do produces an effect and that is retained or

stored in your mind in seed form. These seeds are known by various names. Some call them karma or samskara, some call them archetypes or latent impressions, but it is all the same. Happiness and unhappiness, a good life and a bad life, prosperity and poverty, disease or health – every experience creates an effect. This effect is converted into a seed and these seeds are in the form of vibration.

When my voice is recorded in the tape recorder it has an electronic shape. In the same way, every experience which you go through in life is also recorded because in life there is a recording system. This recording system is known as the witnessing self. It records each and every experience, both objective and subjective. These effects, *samskaras* or seeds, germinate in you for some period, according to their own rules, and at the proper time a particular seed will fructify, thus creating your destiny, affecting your life, body and mind. Therefore this life is an effect of your past karma.

It is not only so with you, but everything. A flower tree grows, flowers bloom, seeds are created, then they are scattered everywhere. They remain inside the earth for some time and in the proper season, when there is heat, air, water and nitrogen they grow.

Some seeds are destroyed, some seeds are impotent, but most seeds have potential, they will grow. They will remain hibernating in the earth for one, two or even three years, therefore these seeds are indestructible. Not only with the flowers, trees and plants, but with everything in this universe there is a law called the law of cause and effect.

The law of cause and effect can also be called the law of action and reaction. You hit a tin plate, it produces a sound. You hit a piece of wood, it produces a sound. You love somebody, he will react. You hate somebody, she will react. You help somebody, he will react and the relationship between action, and reaction is equal and opposite. You create action, there will be a reaction. Only the action of an enlightened person has no reaction, one who has gone beyond matter. A jnani who has gone beyond matter, his

actions do not breed reaction, but the action of everybody in this creation creates a reaction.

This is the eternal law. This is not my law. You may not like it, but it is the truth. This is the law of karma. We do not see it because we have no time to see it, but if you analyze yourself you must accept that you are a product of something. You are not just born. Your body is the result of the union between two forces. You are not immaculate. Nobody is immaculate, therefore you are a product.

Even as your body is a product, your mind also should be a product. How can you say that your body is the product of two forces and your mind is independent? The way you think, feel and imagine, the way you act in your family, the way you move, is the product of some cause. Therefore, man's life on this planet is a link in a great chain. This is the truth, but at the same time nature has given man one small spark. This little spark is called independent will. In yoga this is called *purushartha*, the power of the spirit. Everyone has it. It is in seed form. It was born with us, but we are not able to utilize it.

In order to utilize this power of the will you must have a strong mind. However the power of the will does not operate in most people. We therefore live the lives of circumstances, and nature kicks us like a football and we keep on being tossed from this end of the field to that end of the field. In order to develop this power of will there are many things that you will have to accomplish. First of all you will have to learn how to control the impulses of your mind, you will have to learn how to discipline the body-mind relationship and you will have to learn how to focus the energies of the mind.

You will have to learn how to stop the dissipation of the mind. Can you stop your mind for a second? Can you focus your mind for a minute? Can you stop your mind for some time? If you can, then your willpower will come to operation, but I can tell you one thing – man can develop his willpower, he can make some amendments to the destiny of his life, but as long as you are in the human body, you cannot completely escape destiny. You may be a great yogi, you may be a

perfected siddha, you may even be an incarnation of divinity. You may be an avatar, a messiah or a prophet, but you still cannot totally override this destiny.

We have seen the history of the past. Even prophets and saints, when they were born, were also under the control of destiny to some extent. Therefore, let us develop our willpower as much as possible and help matters to become a little better, but do not think of completely escaping destiny. In order to escape destiny you will have to become the master of nature and, if you manage to escape destiny, it will create a crisis in the realm of nature.

Why does the universal, perfect and infinite mind manifest in the material world that is not perfect, and why do we strive to conquer that which we always used to have?

I do not know the answer to this question. Why all this? I do not know. Why should there be manifestation of life? Why should perfect become imperfect and why again should the imperfect try to become perfect? Why does the all-knowing become ignorant? I think the question and the answer are both transcendental.

I have thought a lot about it. I have read a lot about it. I have read the definitions of philosophies and religious, but these replies have not convinced me and therefore I am expressing my regret that I will not be able to answer this question. I do not know the reply.

What is the psychology of a woman who, even though she is devoted to her husband, still goes with many other men. How can she cope with it when her husband has no understanding for this?

Well, I have never thought about this. I am basically a teacher of yoga. There are many social currents throughout the world and I have studied all of them. Some cultures believe in monogamy, polygamy or polyandry. Everyone has been practising it under the cover of religion and everybody says that this is the order of God.

In the Hindu religion husband and wife cannot go elsewhere. That is considered to be the highest virtue. Their books talk about it day and night: husband to wife, wife to husband, finish it. Absolute chastity and virginity before marriage; absolute, one hundred percent, no possibility of divorcing, but in other religions divorce is possible.

When religion accepts divorce, then they should accept everything. You cannot talk about loyalty and divorce at the same time. After divorce she is not going to be alone nor is he going to be all alone. It will just be a disaster for the mind because, for emotional support, more than sexual support, even for family purposes, they have to be with each other.

In Hindu society, for a healthy, strong family and a good life, it is one to one, but if she is not able to propagate then it has to be decided whether another girl has to come into the picture, not otherwise. Also, the marital rights of the men and women should be the same, therefore I find many contradictions. I say that even if she is not able to propagate, she is your wife, she alone is your wife. Just for the excuse of propagation you cannot bring another one. Or just because you may be impotent, she cannot have another one. So I see contradictions in these religions. Under the excuse of propagation, under the excuse of divorce, everything is all right; this means religion is accepting it. They do not say it, but it is implied. They say, "Don't do it", but the way it has been organised you have no other choice.

Of course I am not an authority because I have not studied this subject and at the same time I do not want to get involved in your personal affairs. People have their own way of life. Arabic people have their own, Europeans, Africans and Hindus have their own styles. I mean, what am I going to teach you? So it is better I keep quiet.

How can we get rid of attachments?

It is not necessary for one to get rid of attachment. Attachment is necessary for evolution and even if you want to get rid of attachment, you will never be able to do it. You

may break your attachments with a person or with a place, but attachment continues in the mind in some form or the other. Love is attachment, but hatred is also attachment, therefore, according to the science of yoga, instead of getting rid of attachment you should try to get rid of identification. Pain and unhappiness originate from identification and this identification is a quality of the mind.

It is necessary for everyone to understand that relationship, association and attachment are necessary for your mental growth. Animals have no attachment and no particular association. They have progeny, they have sexual mating, but then it is soon forgotten. It is only with human beings that you find there is a philosophy of relationship and attachment. Those human societies where there is no particular philosophy of relationship and attachment are inferior types of society.

I see another danger when you try to get rid of attachment. Suppose a husband is not attached to his wife or a wife is not attached to her husband, there is definitely going to be an emotional, social crisis and there will be serious insecurity. The husband has attachment for the wife so he has security, she has attachment for him so she has security, security is so important for the human mind. If you become insecure in your family you will have mental problems, you will have an emotional crisis.

Do you understand how important security is? The basis of security is attachment. In India the philosophy of relationship is over-exercised; in European society the philosophy of relationship is very weak and flimsy. I am not talking about Greek people, but about Europeans in general; their attachment for each other is very fragile, therefore in European cultures and civilization there are unbelievable mental problems. There are an unbelievable number of suicides and an unbelievable number of divorces, although the Christian society in Europe is a monogamous society. Christianity believes in monogamy, it does not believe in polygamy or polyandry, but is there monogamy in the West?

No, because the philosophy of relationship and attachment is very weak and fragile. In India we believe in the proper functioning of attachment and relationship.

This proper functioning of relationship is not only necessary for society, but for the individual. When a child is born, you are happy, therefore it is necessary that you have an attachment for him and he must have attachment for you. If you and your child are not attached to each other there will be a process of what we call disintegration. Disintegration can happen between mother and child. Disintegration can take place between husband and wife, and this disintegration is a crisis in society and a crisis in one's mind. How can such a person meditate? How can such a person attain samadhi? European society is going through a process of disintegration and that is precisely the reason why Europe has a good religion, a prosperous society, but they have not produced even one guru. Even two thousand years ago they had to import a guru from Israel. Christ was not European and he was not Christian.

I am specially dealing with this question because I do not believe that for spiritual life we should destroy the philosophy of attachment. You can just imagine, if my attachment with my disciples is not strong then nothing can happen, nothing can function. There is a relationship between guru and disciple, there are rules and regulations guiding that, and there is a limit to how much we have to be attached to each other.

Apart from human beings, we have attachments to objects: to our job, money, property, house and car, radio, television and many things. If you have no philosophy of relationship between yourself and the objects everything will disintegrate. Well, if you have a dog in your house, keep one television and radio in his room and see what he does, because he does not understand the philosophy of relationship. It is the human being who understands that philosophy of everything that is related to him. Then there is also in human beings a philosophy of attachment and relationship to a philosophy and religion.

All of you must understand that attachment is a necessary element of human life, but besides attachment there is a one thing called identification. I will give you a brief example of this from my experience. I had a servant and he used to work in the ashram for eleven months of the year. He used to go home only for one month. In the ashram he used to work from dawn to late at night and he worked with great attachment for everyone. One day he received a letter from his family that his wife was seriously ill. This news disturbed him very much. He could not wait even for one day, but went straight back to his village.

Now just understand. He is working with me for eleven months and trying to serve me in the ashram, but his identification with his family affairs is much more serious. Therefore, try to get rid of identification and not attachments. All yoga aspirants must have a philosophy of relationships and attachments, and then you will grow.

However, there is a very high state in spiritual life. I do not know how long it will take for you to be there. There, one has no attachment, no sorrow and no happiness, no husband and wife, no guru and disciple – nothing, but that is a very high one, and that person does not try for it. As he grows in spirit, as he grows in mind, as he grows in knowledge, it comes to him automatically, therefore you must have a positive philosophy, a positive approach, or positive ideas of attachment and relationships. Do not destroy these things. I am repeating – do not destroy these things. When you become enlightened, everything will happen by itself.

What is the meaning and purpose of karma sannyasa? When is one considered to be ready and what are the requirements?

The life of a householder should be a means for the attainment of a higher experience, therefore anything a householder thinks and does should be for the fulfilment of this purpose. Generally it is not practised. Most people who are householders are not aware of this fact. People don't even know what the purpose or aim of the life of a householder should be. They feel that the purpose of work

is to earn money and enjoy it, and that the purpose of family life is to have sexual gratification, therefore they live a very undisciplined life. Most householders are like a ship without a rudder and without an anchor, and that is why they are unhappy. Unhappiness is not due to tragedy or poverty. Unhappiness is there because we have lost the purpose in life.

In India, not now but in ancient days, they had divided the whole of life into four sections. Each section was of a period of twenty-five years approximately. Twenty-five years of the life of knowledge, *brahmacharya*, celibacy; twenty-five years of responsibility and action, growth of the mind and character; twenty-five years of spiritual life as a householder; twenty-five years as a sannyasin, nothing to do with the life of a householder. These four orders of twenty-five years were known as ashram, not yoga ashram, but ashram.

Ashram does not mean a monastery; ashram means a place where you make a lot of effort for material and spiritual gain. The word *ashram* means labour or hard work. Ashram is a place where you have to put in very hard work for a different purpose. Therefore, the first twenty-five years was for the acquirement of knowledge and the life of celibacy was known as brahmacharya ashram.

The second twenty-five years, when you become a householder; you have to put in another type of hard work. You have to face responsibilities and obligations, work out your passions, emotions, desires, experience pain and happiness, and you have to learn how to balance yourself. You have to confront the tragedies and the comedies in your life, face hatred and jealousy, and then you have to grow in mind and character. You have to acquire a balance. You have to understand the laws of higher nature and then you learn inner discipline, understanding, balance of mind, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, contentment, humility, generosity and so on. Then, with these qualities, you gradually shift to spiritual life as a householder with your wife and children. You devote your life to the practices of yoga. You try to disidentify yourself from the events of life, to develop a type of

dispassion, and then you start meditation and try to discover the self within you.

After the third order of twenty-five years, if you are alive, you can take sannyasa, have no relationship with anyone, no attachment, no connections, no personal money, no personal emotions, no personal wealth, no personal aims. You are free from any bondage. This is how you go into the life of spiritual experience.

There are two types of sannyasa. One is absolute sannyasa, about which I have just made a brief mention. There is another type of sannyasa which is for wise householders. Those householders who want to be householders, but at the same time want to rise high in spiritual life, for them there is karma sannyasa. So, there are two types of renunciation. One is the renunciation of objects, events and persons. In that renunciation you renounce your family, property, place and relationship, but not everybody can do it nor should do it. It is meant only for a few people. It is meant for a few brave humans.

There is another type of renunciation. That is not the renunciation of action, of person, or of association, but renunciation of the fruits and outcome of the action. You don't have to renounce the karma, but there is some fruit accruing from the karma. That result affects you. That makes you happy or unhappy. That causes imbalance in your mental and emotional life. You will have to disidentify yourself from the consequences of the actions in which you are involved. This is the ideal of a householder who wants to live the life of a karma sannyasin.

A karma sannyasin is a householder who is trying to experience inner experience as a householder. He does not make any external changes in his life, but he becomes aware within himself about his relationship with everything. Karma sannyasa is a kind of initiation. Even as you have mantra initiation, or sannyasa initiation, in the same way you have initiation, *diksha*, called karma sannyasa. A householder, either a man or a lady, married or unmarried, young or old,

can approach a guru in whom they have trust, because in the life of a karma sannyasin, the guru is the most important factor. In this mysterious spiritual life you definitely need a guide with some sort of experience about it.

The guru's initiation to his disciple is that he should maintain the ideals of a householder and that a householder must be proud that he is a householder. Side by side with his seeking for happiness he should also seek his inner self. Why should you always search for external happiness? I am not against it, but always, all the time and everywhere, in every situation you are only searching for happiness of the mind and of the senses, and you don't get it. If you get it, it's all right, you go on, but you don't get it. How can you get it when you have lost the act of balance?

Just as sleep is balancing the daily actions, hunger balances a good feast. After walking ten or twenty miles, if you sit down, that is a good balance; seasons balance each other, summer and winter. In the same way, in life also there has to be some balance. All the time you are searching and searching for external happiness. All the time you are looking only outside, you are chasing the shadow. All the time you want happiness from people and events, you want happiness from external things, but if you try to look within yourself, at least for some time in your life, there will be balance.

Spiritual experience, or the path of yoga, the path of meditation, balances your external and personal happiness. A person who meditates each day has a better quality of happiness in life. A person who sits for one hour quietly and calmly practising mantra, practising yoga and meditation, gets better happiness from events and from everybody.

Happiness is related through the senses to the mind. The five *indriyas*, the five senses, carry the sensation of happiness to the mind. Pleasure and pain are experienced by the mind through the medium of these five senses. In fact there are ten senses. Five senses are motor nerves, they are known as *karmendriyas*, senses for automotion. Five *indriyas* are the sensorial nervous system, they are known as *jnanendriyas*,

through which you receive the sensations into the mind. These five jnanendriyas are the eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin.

Through these five senses, the experience of pleasure and pain is transmitted, conducted or communicated to the mind, then an experience takes place, which means the mind is dependent on sense experience. If your senses carry unpleasant sensations to the mind, can your mind experience pleasure? All the objects in the world, all the people in the world, all the events in the world are dualistic in nature. That is to say, the positive sensation and the negative sensation both accrue from an object, but if you do not depend on external sensations or the senses, then you look within yourself in meditation.

If you are able to go deeper into yourself, then you will come across an experience of immortal and enduring bliss. The experience of the self is called *ananda*, which is neither pain nor pleasure. It is state of balance. It is not felicity, it is not gaiety, it is not a sort of joy, it has no excitement. It has perfect depth. That state is called ananda and the experience which you get from external objects, people and events is called pleasure and pain. If you are expecting only pleasure from external life, then you are expecting a Utopia. Therefore, a householder, as a karma sannyasin, must search for the ananda, for that inner balance, within himself. At the same time one should try to maintain a balance in external life during the experience of pleasure and pain.

When the householder is not satisfied with his present way of life, then he can think about taking karma sannyasa. After karma sannyasa, he takes a voluntary vow to look into himself. If you can quieten your mind for some time every day, the experience will be indescribable. You can just imagine, when you take a little bit of whisky and champagne how nice you feel. Remember, when you sleep for five or six or seven hours every night, how nice you feel in the morning. Even these external things are able to give you so much rest, so much relaxation and so much comfort in a short time and for a short time. How much more would your happiness be if you knew how to establish yourself within yourself?

I have prepared a manual for karma sannyasins. It is now available only in English. Those who want the book in English should write to the ashrams in India or Australia, but if you want it in Greek, then the ashram should translate that book and make it available to all householders.

What is ego? How does ashram life work in relation to ego?

In philosophical terminology, ego is used in two different contexts. Firstly, it means ‘the basis of individuality’, the feeling of ‘I’, the feeling of your existence. This philosophical ego is even present during very deep sleep. In dream this ego uses objective material for experience. Therefore, this normal experience in waking, dreams and in deep sleep are related to ego. You can say that ego is responsible for every empirical experience. If ego is withdrawn, there is no empirical experience.

This ego is known in philosophy as the notion of ‘I’, it is also known as the ‘little self’. In fact all your experiences in every state of mind are dependent on ego. Through the practices of yoga, when the ego is withdrawn, then there is no empirical experience. The enlightened people do not function through ego.

In philosophy there are two elements known: the first is ‘ego’ and another element is known as ‘self’. Self means *atma*, ‘higher spirit’ or ‘super-mind’. It is very difficult for me to give a name to that self. Many times Socrates used this term. When he said, “Know thyself”, he meant the cosmic or higher self. In other philosophical texts they have used different terms for this. Now, for convenience, I use the words, ‘lower empirical self’ and ‘transcendental self’. To understand this better you can use another terminology: lower ego and super ego. The lower ego is responsible for all empirical and worldly experiences. The higher ego or the super ego is responsible for enlightenment or higher knowledge.

This is about the philosophical ego, but there is another form of ego which is used more or less in the moral sense. You might say, “Oh, this man has too much ego.” Here ego

means pride, the man thinks too much about himself. This ego is the moral quality in man. For spiritual life you have to transcend this ego also because the ego is responsible for the conflict inside you and in your family also. When you have a very fat ego you are not ready to understand the other party. When you have a very fat ego you think that everybody is an idiot and you are the wise man. Therefore, not only for spiritual purposes, but also for day-to-day life, ego is a very great obstacle.

Not only in individual life, but in social and national life also, ego is very dangerous. Many nations having fat egos ultimately perished. Many leaders with fat egos perished. Ego does help you for a short time. When you become egoistic you go on threatening people. You go on threatening your children or your wife, your uncle or your father or someone else, and everybody is scared of you for some time, but everybody is looking for an opportunity to put you down. They keep very quiet for some time, but everybody is waiting for the right opportunity and when that comes they give you a kick and they push you out.

That is concerned with family and society, however we are concerned about our spiritual life because when the ego is very fat it becomes very difficult to penetrate through the mind. An egoistic person has a very hard shell over his mind and he finds it very difficult to meditate, therefore in order to overcome the mind you must find the right method.

One should develop humility, one should develop kindness, understanding, mercy and compassion. You must feel friendliness with a person who is happy, you must feel pain when a person is suffering and you must be very happy when a person is doing something very good; you should have an understanding for a person who is not going the right way. These are the qualifications, qualities, which you have to develop in order to erase your ego.

In the ashram life, guru is the person with whom humility, dedication and surrender are practised. The first and foremost quality of a disciple is humility and egolessness.

Whether the disciple is a renunciate or a householder, in both cases egolessness before the guru is essential. First you practise egolessness before your guru and when you practise this for some time it becomes your nature. When it becomes your nature you can practise it with anybody and everybody.

In India there is a very ancient tradition which is thousands of years old and even today it is fully practised. When the disciple goes to his guru he carries three things: number one a flower, number two a coconut, number three money. They are symbolic. A flower is the most tender thing in the world. There is nothing more tender, nothing more beautiful, than a flower in this world. Everybody loves a flower, nobody hates it. When you offer a flower to your guru, you are offering your heart, because the heart is with you, it is also most tender. It is responsible for life. If the heart fails, you die. This heart receives love and hatred. This heart receives the shocks and joys. This flower is the replica of the heart of the disciple and when he offers a flower to the guru, it means that he is offering his heart, his emotions, his feelings. He is offering everything which the heart represents.

The second thing which he offers is the coconut. The coconut has a very hard shell outside, but inside there is a very soft kernel. It is a white stuff, like butter. That coconut represents the ego. When you are offering that coconut to your guru, you are offering your head. Head does not mean the brain. When you said 'head' you mean ego. "Oh, his head is very bad!" This indicates the ego is very hard, because inside the ego there is a soft stuff. So, the disciple goes to the guru, who takes the coconut and breaks it. This is a ritual I am talking about. It means when you go to the guru, you must break your ego.

The third thing is money, but nowadays many people find gold and silver very difficult, so they give banknotes. Money in yoga, money in Sanskrit, is called *mudra*. *Mudra* here means the 'mood of attachment.' Most people are attached to money. They work for it, they even steal it, they murder their own beloved ones and they throw

away their wife and children for the sake of money. They become merciless for the sake of money. Money is a very important factor so far as the life of the ego is concerned. The attachment to money is like a life-saving, important vitamin to the ego, therefore they offer money to the guru. It symbolizes their surrender of attachment.

In India this tradition is still alive today. If I go to the house of my disciple and ask him or her for any amount of money, they won't refuse it. Of course, I never do it because the guru also has certain duties, certain responsibilities and also he has certain morals. I have just to write a small letter, "Send me five thousand rupees." It comes, because the relationship between guru and disciple is based on higher factors. It's not like father and son, it's not like husband and wife, and it's not like brother and sister. It is like God and devotee.

If God came to you in the night and said, "Give me all the bank cheques," would you do it or not? Of course, if you believe he is God you will do it. Or if God came to me in the night and said, "Get away from here, jump in the ocean and die," I would do it because I believe in Him. So, egolessness must be started with the guru. Of course, you must be sure that he too has his moral standards. If the disciple becomes egoless then the guru can use him to the maximum. Even though the disciple has surrendered, the guru should not exploit him. The guru has to be what we call 'beyond matter'; he should not expect any material thing from his disciple.

God does not need any material thing from you. Of course you give everything to Him. You offer your heart, you offer your head, you offer your money, you offer your children, but He doesn't want it. God only wants one thing from you – that is called bhakti. You understand what bhakti is? Your pure emotion, pure devotion, not in prayers, not in rituals, not even singing his glories. Even as you love your child, even as you love your beautiful girl, even as you are attached to your property and other things – that emotion, only that emotion he wants.

It is the same thing with the guru. He doesn't want your head, he doesn't want your flowers, he doesn't want your money, but you should give it, because you need to. Why? To get rid of ego. Those people who want spiritual life will have to solve this riddle of ego. First you have to solve it on a day to day basis, then you will have to solve this on a higher spiritual basis. In nirvana there is no ego. In samadhi there is no ego. When there is no ego, the vision takes place. When there is no ego, then the divine or higher or supreme vision takes place, not at all before that.

Is devotion a necessary requirement in spiritual life? How can devotion be developed?

Devotion is developed in the human incarnation gradually. Throughout the evolution of the soul a gradual training is imparted to you to develop devotion. How do you make a pot? First you collect the proper earth, then you mould it, you give it a shape on a revolving wheel, then it is to be baked, glazed and painted, and the pot is ready.

In the same way, first you have to develop emotion and attachment. You must develop love and attachment for various people. After you have developed love and attachment for the people in this world, then you should transform it or channel it. There are two channels for emotion. One is called the empirical channel, the other is called the spiritual channel.

In the spiritual channel, first of all you must have satsang, you hear the stories of the saints, that is the first step to devotion. Then you have association with saints, that is the second step to devotion. Then you find a guru for yourself, that is the third step to devotion. Finally, when your devotion has reached a climax, then you have devotion to God. Therefore, devotion should be developed step by step.

Many times we think of devotion to God. We express our feelings, but it is all intellectual, because that devotion does not help you to transcend the mind. When true devotion dawns in the mind, at once you lose this lower self, immediately you lose the lower self. If you are anaesthetized,

you lose consciousness of touch, but if you have taken anaesthetic and you have not lost that consciousness, it means there was something wrong with the anaesthetic. In the same way, when you express your devotion to God, but you do not transcend the mind, it means it was not true. I know that bhakti, or devotion to God, is so powerful that, if it comes into your mind for a split second, you forget all – your wife, children, everything.

We have heard about the life of saints. At the height of bhakti they completely lost their personal ego. There was a great saint in the Middle East. His name was Mansur. He was a great devotee of God, but the people were not happy with him, so he was brought for execution, because that is the tradition of the East. His skin was peeled, like you peel the skin of potato, but still he had no pain. He was only repeating the name of truth. He was intoxicated.

This intoxication of bhakti is such an intoxication. You can't even understand it. Our prayers are ritualistic. Our devotion or feeling is also very, very superficial. Now, remember one thing; just as the passion for a man and a girl makes you transcend the ego, devotion should also make you transcend the ego. A saint questioned, "Do you love God as much as you love your beautiful maiden?" The disciple blinked. Please say, "Yes."

There is a beautiful story. About four hundred years ago there was a man in India. He married a young girl. One day his wife went to her parent's home. He loved her very much, he was so infatuated with her that he couldn't live without her even for one moment, so he followed her. He crossed the river, not by boat, but by taking the help of dead body. He scaled the wall of their house, because the main door was closed, with the help of a python. He did not know it was a python, neither had he known that it was a dead body. He went into her apartment, she was startled. She said, "Why have you come?" He said, "I can't live without you. I will die!" She said, "Foolish! So much infatuation you have for me? So much passion you have for me? If you had the same

infatuation and passion for God by now you would have been liberated.”

That gave the young man a tough shock. He turned back. He never saw her again. He came back and went to the guru, became a swami and devoted his whole life to God. His name is known to every Indian. He wrote a beautiful, inspired book on the glories of Rama. It is sung by every Indian, by poor illiterate labourers and also by the academics in the university.

So, the point of *bhakti* is very important in spiritual life, but you can't jump immediately. First read about the glories of saints, then associate with them, then have a guru and have a relationship with him, then your way of devotion will be clear. It is the most difficult thing in life. You can have a great intellect, you can be the most powerful person on the earth, you can be a great poet or an artist, a statesman or politician, but all these things are worldly achievements. They cannot give you fulfilment, they cannot give you vision. They are necessary for you to live in this world, they are necessary for your survival, but the true wealth is *bhakti*, or what you call devotion.

I will give a story. This story is about a lady. She was a princess and maybe some of you know about her. She was living when Akbar the Great was ruling India. Do you know about Akbar the Great? History has three great men: Akbar the Great, Alexander the Great and Ashoka the Great. All the three start with 'A'. First Alexander, you know about him, I don't have to tell you. Ashoka was born after Buddha. He took the message of Buddha throughout the world. He was the greatest emperor of India. In the fifteenth century, there was Akbar the Great.

In a western state of India there was a princess known as Mirabai. When she was six years old a swami, or a saint, visited her father's palace. That swami had a little statue of Krishna and she began to develop a liking for that statue. He gave that statue to her. She somehow developed the idea that Krishna was her husband. She was only six years old. I don't

know how a girl six years old can think of a husband, but there it is; she developed the idea, “Krishna is my husband”, and she became completely enraptured in her love for him.

Her parents couldn't understand all this. They thought it was a child loving a doll and so, when the proper time came, she was married to a man. He was the most powerful king of India at that time in Chittor, near Udaipur. It was a place near Jaipur in western India, a very powerful region. She went to him, but she was always merged in her love for Krishna, thinking that he was her husband. She used to converse with him in a closed room, just like you converse with your wife or husband. This was whispered about in the palace. Her husband thought that she might be having an affair with somebody, but when the doors were opened, they found that she was talking with herself.

Finally, her mother-in-law wanted to finish her, because she was a queen and she was behaving in a funny way; a queen has to be a queen with lipsticks, powders, cosmetics, dresses and aprons. She used to go to the temple for kirtan. Her kirtans became very famous and in kirtan, with the common folk, she used to dance. The fame of her kirtan was so much that Akbar the Great used to come to attend her kirtan, but her mother-in-law did not like all this. Mirabai was an aristocrat, but she was moving with the common people. Her mother-in-law sent her poison, but when she took the poison, nothing happened to her. Then she sent a cobra in an empty packet, and when the packet was opened, it became the replica of Krishna, like a shivalingam. It was not because she was performing a miracle, but her whole soul, her whole ego, her whole personality was merged in the idea, in the thought of Krishna. She was one-pointed all the time.

Finally she left the palace. She came to Mathura, near Delhi, the place where Krishna was born. She wanted to live there for the rest of her life. She became the disciple of a great swami. This is a very beautiful story. When she went to Mathura, she went to the swami, the guru, but he refused to see her, sending the message, “I don't see women.” She sent

a message back, and the message was, “I thought that there was only one man in the world and that was Krishna, and all others were women. Where has this second man come from?”

According to the truth there is only one purusha, one reality, one man. We are all individual souls. I am not talking about the body, I am talking about the reality. There is only one purusha; we are born of nature, we are born of prakriti, we are born of matter. That was the philosophical question she put in her message to that guru, “I know that there is only one man in this universe, where has this second man come from?” The guru was astounded and accepted her as his disciple.

The rest of her life she spent in singing and singing and singing, composing thousands of songs and all the songs are love songs. They are songs of devotion. She considers Krishna to be her husband, loves him, serves him and wants him, and when she died she died in divine circumstances. She entered into a temple of Krishna and converted her matter into light.

This is also one of the yogic effects. When your bhakti overpowers you, then this physical body is converted into another material. In the beginning bhakti transforms your emotions, then it transforms your mind, then it transforms your attitudes, then it transforms your perception. Maybe it transforms the physical body. The body can be integrated into the form of light. The body can be transformed into the form of flowers. The power of bhakti is very great. It is not only going to a sanctum sanctorum. Of course you can go, it is good; it is better than going to a pub, but it is not the ultimate.

This body is the temple. Krishna or God resides within you. You start from outside first, then you go inside, then you develop your love. You go on developing it more and more. First you forget all your difficulties, then you forget all your relationships, then you forget all past, present and future, and finally you forget yourself. This is how the divine metamorphosis takes place.

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Meditation

Municipal Theatre, Mytilini, 7 May 1984

This my first trip to your beautiful island and town. I have been visiting Greece for many years in connection with teaching, preaching and promoting yoga there, and I was really surprised to see the interest and enthusiasm of the Greek people. In this age yoga does not need any introduction, it has become well known throughout the world, in every country, and scientists everywhere are accepting the need for yoga in human life.

The word 'yoga' is a very general expression, even as you use the word 'education'. What exactly do you mean by education? There are various faculties in education, and when you say 'education', you mean one or all of those faculties. In the same way, when we use the word 'yoga' we mean one or more faculties. The science and the practice of yoga is related to every aspect of human life. There is a branch of yoga which is related to the body and life principle; there is a form of yoga which is related to mind, emotion and intellect, therefore there are many branches of yoga.

Therapeutic yoga

It has been established by the scientists today that in many psychosomatic illnesses yoga can be very, very helpful. That

is the therapeutic aspect of yoga which has been discovered recently, in about the last three or four decades, by the western scientists. This aspect of yoga is vigorously practised in many countries throughout the world for treatment of chronic psychosomatic diseases. This is a very technical side of yoga in which medical men and scientists are working in India, Japan, Poland, the Soviet Union and in America. This aspect of yoga which I am talking about has become so famous that thousands of books are being written by authorities. However, this evening that is not my subject. I am just giving you a glimpse of that side of yoga which has become so popular in our materialistic society. There are thousands of yoga teachers in Europe, Asia, America and in other continents who teach yoga for this purpose only.

There is another aspect of yoga which has also drawn the attention of people today, that is yoga concerning relaxation of physical, mental and emotional stress. In our century, in our time, stress has increased all over the world. The rich are under stress and poor people are also under stress. Stress is not only born of prosperity and affluence; it is born of epidemics, famine and wars, therefore stress-born diseases throughout the world are on the increase. In our day-to-day life, our behaviour is very greatly influenced by these stresses and there are certain practices in yoga which can effectively balance the stress condition. It has been found that during certain practices of raja yoga the brainwaves change. As a result of the change in the pattern of the brainwaves, stress is removed from the heart and nervous system, but I am not going to talk on this subject this evening.

Mankind's inner need

People now are getting increasingly interested in discovering the deeper areas of their own existence, the deeper areas of their own personality. Whatever our position may be, many times we begin to think; we become introspective. "Who am I and what is my relationship with the whole universe? Am I in any way connected with the universe or am I a completely

different unit tossing about in this great existence?” We look at ourselves, but we are not prepared to accept that this body and mind is ourself. Sometimes, during deep introspection, these questions arise in the mind of everybody. These questions have arisen in the minds of people thousands of years ago. “Who am I?” is the question.

Wise men in different times have tried to give an answer. In India the wise men gave an answer to this question. 2,500 years ago Lord Buddha gave an answer to this question. A little later another wise man in Greece also gave an answer. There has been a tradition of wise men throughout the East who have tried to give an answer to this question of “Who am I?” But the answer is not intellectual; it is through the practices of yoga that one can really experience the answer. Of course you can grow, you can proceed through a philosophical process and you can try to decide the nature of your self, but an intellectual answer is not enough. The knowledge of the self, the knowledge of the higher consciousness or the supreme consciousness, should be a matter of personal experience because it is not through the mind, not through the intellect, not through a thinking process, that you understand your self.

Yoga has an answer through a practical way of meditation. The system of meditation is out-and-out practical and therefore exact. Meditation is a process in which you transcend time, space and object for some time. Then the question comes, “How can we meditate and what exactly happens in meditation?”

Personal experience

In the science of yoga there is a complete system of meditation known as raja yoga. In this system, necessary preparation and ways to develop meditation are fully described.

Meditation is based on one-pointedness of mind. The mind which thinks many, many things should be concentrated around one object and one idea. If you carefully analyze your mind, you will find that it is dissipated and therefore it is not

able to go in; it is not able to experience itself. When the mind is one-pointed it thinks only of one object or one thing or item and then it becomes very powerful, it gains momentum and acquires high frequency. Those people who are trying to develop their willpower and those trying to develop their mental power must remember that, without concentration of mind, without one-pointedness of mind, the willpower, the mental power, cannot be obtained.

At the same time one knows how difficult it is to control the mind to discipline it or bring the mind to one point. In yogic techniques there are a few practices through which concentration of mind, one-pointedness of mind and meditation, can be achieved. One of the most powerful ways for achieving concentration of mind is called pranayama.

Pranayama

Pranayama is a system of breathing. The breathing is practised through alternate nostrils and, between inspiration and expiration, the breath is held for some time. When you inhale through one nostril and exhale through another nostril, at that time you are simultaneously dealing with the two hemispheres of the brain which are in constant motion and disturbance. If you practise pranayama for ten or fifteen minutes every day in the morning, according to the system, you will find that you have achieved tranquillity of mind.

There is another way of achieving concentration of mind which is very easy and very intelligible: observing your own natural breath. You have been breathing from the time of birth, all twenty-four hours of the day, but unconsciously. Breath is connected with the life force and, when you breathe in and you breathe out, you should observe that. Observing your own breath for ten or fifteen minutes every morning will give you absolute tranquillity of mind.

Mantra

There is another practice which is recitation of mantra. Mantra is a sound which denotes your personality. This

sound is present in each and everybody in the form of unmanifested vibration and frequencies. Even as everybody has a kind of face, in the same way everybody has a kind of mantra for themselves. This mantra should not be misunderstood to be a holy word or a divine name. Sound, as you know, or should know, is a form of universal energy. Sound is energy in every way and this mantra has colour and form, frequency and, at the same time, movement. When you practise the mantra for some time, then this mantra brings about one-pointedness, concentration and meditation.

The mantra can be practised in many ways: you can practise the mantra mentally, with the rhythm of your natural breath or by chanting it audibly. You can chant the mantra with concentration on the mid-eyebrow centre or in the centre of the brain, and there are many other psychic centres in the body on which you can concentrate and chant the mantra or think about the mantra, but the centre in the heart is considered to be a very powerful centre for those people who are predominantly emotional.

Trataka

In the middle of the eyebrow centre there is a very important psychic nerve and when you close your eyes you can visualize that centre. If you are not able to visualize that centre, then there is a practice. Light a candle in front of you and concentrate or gaze on the flame of the candle for a few seconds without blinking your eyes, without moving your body, then close your eyes and concentrate in the middle of the eyebrow and discover the luminous point. This luminous point is a very, very tiny point, much smaller than a star you can see in the sky, and you have to discover that luminous point for you to go deep into yourself.

Many people who try to practise hypnotism start with this practice, but this is not the purpose for which I am teaching it to you. It is because you must have a basis for concentration and that tiny little star or tiny little spot which is known as bindu should be seen in order to deepen your concentration.

In fact this centre, the middle of the eyebrows, is directly connected with a very important centre which is situated on the upper portion of the spine. The uppermost portion of the spine has a small gland related to ajna chakra. Some call it the eye of intuition and it has another name also, the third eye. It has many names and it is not necessary for me to tell you all that, but it is very difficult to concentrate on that centre directly unless you have a vision of that centre somehow.

In the practice of trataka, first you concentrate on the candle flame and then, through the candle flame, you slowly develop the luminous point. By concentrating on that luminous point, you ultimately come to ajna chakra, the seat of intuition. After discovering the luminous point you can practise your mantra in that centre.

Yantra

There is another important practice in meditation or dhyana yoga. This is the practice of visual concentration on a yantra. There are two types of visual formations: one is called a mandala and the other is a yantra. The mandala is a pictorial form and the yantra is a geometrical form. Mandalas are sometimes anthropomorphic, sometimes theriomorphic, sometimes of animal form, sometimes half human and half animal, and so on. However, yantras are the most powerful form of meditation. These are non-intellectual substances and it is very difficult to explain the theory of yantras. From olden days, almost every religion, every culture and every nation was practising the science of yantra.

These yantras represent the symbol of your unconscious; these yantras represent the symbol of your unknown nature and there are many types of yantras. If you practise concentration on them you begin to visualize some inner experiences. The concentration on yantra influences dreams, influences thoughts and influences one's way of thinking. I have told you already that it is not necessary to intellectualize these yantras because you can't. These yantras are present in the universe. In fact the whole universe is geometrically

designed and in your mind also all the thoughts are stored, or rather recorded, in a geometric shape. It is wonderful to know that whatever I am saying to you is in the form of a sound, but when it is recorded in your mind, finally and ultimately, it is in a geometric shape.

These yantras represent different forms of energy in creation or in the universe. There is no more powerful form of concentration than concentration on the yantras and these yantras are related to or connected with the six spheres of mind. According to yoga and other sciences, there are seven shapes. One sphere is this sphere in which you are living at the moment. Besides this sphere, there are six other spheres and each sphere has a yantra or geometric symbol.

Centres of energy relating the individual and the universe

If you concentrate, for example, on a symbol called the inverted triangle, this inverted triangle intellectually means nothing, but you will be surprised that, by concentrating on that inverted triangle, your mind is able to express its deeper experiences. Therefore, on this basis there are six psychic centres in your body. These six are the centres of energy related to the whole universe. Man is a part of the universe. The whole universe is present in you, in us, in a microcosmic form and certainly it is possible that one can go within oneself and experience the totality of the experience. This aspect of yoga has now drawn great attention throughout the world. There are millions of people who are trying to discover their deeper, higher and transcendental nature.

It does not take much time to practise yoga. If you can devote a few minutes from your busy life every day, either in the morning or at night, and follow just one system of meditation or one system of concentration, you will find, in the course of time, you are able to discover something more about yourself.

There are four main divisions of yoga: karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga and jnana yoga. Karma yoga is to be practised for balancing your personality. Bhakti yoga should

be practised for developing a healthy emotional personality. The practices of jnana yoga are for the mind and supreme knowledge. Then there are other forms of yoga which are equally important. The practices of hatha yoga are well known throughout the world. They are good for the body and your health. The practices of kundalini yoga are for developing a healthy and strong mind. The practices of laya yoga are for those who want to go deep into samadhi or the absolute mind.

Samadhi

There is a very high stage in yoga that is called samadhi. While you are practising meditation, while you are practising yoga, there comes a very short moment, there comes a very rare moment, when for some time this little ego is lost and the higher self becomes manifest. In order to attain this particular samadhi, people have to make a lot of effort. In yoga this is known as samadhi and Lord Buddha called it nirvana. It is for a very short moment; it comes as a flying glimpse. During that moment the external light is put off and the inner light is lit. This is the aim of yoga for sincere and serious-minded people. Whichever form of yoga you need, or can accept, practise it and it will help you.

A few years ago I came to Athens and established one small school of yoga, but today thousands of people in Athens and around Greece are practising yoga according to their own wish and according to their need. The one thing which they want, and the one thing which they are striving to experience, is the inner self.

Whatever your need and desire, you can start yoga at any point. With the body upright and straight, with the eyes closed, when you devote ten or fifteen minutes with absolute regularity every day and keep your mind on one principle, one object, one sound or one yantra, you are sure to succeed sooner or later. We have lived with external material life and it has not given us the promised things. Now let us also try to live with the inner being.

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Satsang

Hotel Xenia, Mytilini, 7 May 1984

How can you help western education? In theory we know certain things, but western education has largely neglected the right hemisphere of the brain. How can yoga redress the balance?

In the field of education a lot of research has been made in many countries, including France, in connection with yoga and its effect on children. This research is divided into two sections. One is the effect of yoga practices on the general intelligence, behaviour and discipline, or you may say, manifestation of normal children. The second is the effect of yoga on those children who are retarded, who are not normal. Two different forms of yoga have been found very effective in this respect.

For improving the mental condition, intelligence and manifestation of retarded children two special forms of yoga have been found very useful, which are known as concentration and meditation. There is another form of yoga which is known as relaxation and a third form known as hatha yoga, or the yoga of postures and breathing. However, concentration and meditation have been found most useful for the children who are mentally retarded.

Concentration and meditation have two bases: concentration on sound and concentration on form. The form has

two sections: pictorial mandala and yantra or concentric geometrical forms. It has been found that these yantras, which are in geometric form, have a direct relationship or direct effect on the archetype of the child. In yogic philosophy, intelligence is an effect of what we call proper formation of archetypes; the children who are mentally backward or retarded have a very confused process of archetype.

For normal children, it is the practice of yoga postures, and breathing which is important. We have found that children like to practise these three things: relaxation, breathing and yoga postures.

A few years ago, an experiment was done in a higher secondary school in Paris and this program was continued for over two years. The education inspectors made a complete observation and study on the effects of the practices on children. The various kinds of data, including IQs, were collected and it was found that the children benefitted greatly. Parents were happy and teachers were happy, but at the same time the children liked the practices so much that they would remind the teacher when the yoga class should take place.

In yoga the internal discipline does not mean the sort of exoteric discipline which we use in our social sense. In fact, here the discipline includes the physical discipline, hormonal discipline and archetypal discipline. If the child has a difficult consciousness on account of their early training or early life they will not be successfully disciplined even if given the best social discipline.

Within everybody's mind, not only children's, but including you too, within everybody's consciousness, there are certain forms or rather symbols. Mind at a deeper level, consciousness at a deeper level, exists in the form of symbols, not in the form of frequencies. This is something which yoga has discovered.

On one level, mind exists in the form of waves. On another level it has frequencies, and at one level, at the base

level, it has the symbols or forms. These symbols and forms are in an unmanifested state. They have to be excited, they have to be disturbed. An intelligent person, or an intelligent child, is that person whose archetypes, whose symbolic formations have been thus disturbed.

Secondly, there has to be a proper hormonal balance. Besides this hormonal balance, the relationship between the body and the endocrine glands must be correct. Of course there is, in yoga, what you call a sort of external discipline, as you have in religion, but that is not academically or classically accepted by yoga. You don't have to tell the child that he should be good. You don't have to tell him that he should be disciplined, because goodness and discipline are an outcome of a proper physiological, biological, emotional and deeper discipline.

The yoga postures which are known as asanas, about which you might already know a little, are not just exercises. In classical yogic texts it is said that these yogic postures work through a group of nerve or energy channels. Externally these yoga postures look like gymnastic exercises and sometimes you can equate them with any other exercises, but the experiments have shown that they have different effects.

Posture means a position, or a situation of the body whereby the two forces in this physical body are balanced. These two forces are known as sympathetic and parasympathetic: input and output, or you could even say the life force and the mental force. If there is an imbalance between the life force and the mental force problems come in the mind.

We have been teaching yoga to the children in many countries. We have found that children like yoga very much.

Can we say that yoga makes an individual more happy and more enlightened? Can we also say that yoga makes a social group more happy, enlightened and creative?

Yoga has various roles to fulfil. There is a form of yoga which is called yoga therapy. It is practised for blood pressure,

asthma, sciatica and many psychosomatic illnesses. There is another form of yoga which is used for overcoming a stress situation in the body. In yoga, they realize three types of stress: physical stress, mental stress and emotional stress. For these three types of stress you have three types of practices.

There are also those forms of yoga which people can practise in order to improve their habits; it is more in the line of personal discipline in life. Then there is another form of yoga in which the mind is brought into a focus of concentration. By increasing or accentuating the energies of the mind, the creativity in the individual is expressed. Beyond this there are other forms of yoga sadhana which are used by the mystics.

Frankly speaking, yoga, by its philosophy and nature, is individualistic. It is not a social ideology. It is not a group ideology. It is out-and-out individualistic. I practise, I improve. You practise, you improve. However, an individual is the centre of society. The society is built up by individuals. Society can influence the individual, true, but individuals can and do create society. In this particular respect yoga has been very clear, keep it individualistic, because the individual has to improve. Later on this individual can create his society. After all, in history it has happened. It is one man who leads the society.

There is another form of yoga and that is kundalini yoga. It is intended for a selected type of people. In that kundalini yoga, certain energy centres in this physical body are expressed or manifested, because kundalini yoga believes that in this physical body there are dormant psychic centres.

When you awaken those centres in the body it indirectly awakens the brain. In yoga it is said that only one portion of the brain is active and nine portions of the brain are not active, which means that only a fragment of the brain is functioning. There are other centres which are lying dormant, which are not participating in the scheme of evolution and these centres in the brain are connected

with those psychic centres. That is considered to be a very important part of yoga intended for selected people. Therefore, everything depends on what you personally want and need.

When I go to the United States, everybody is asking for peace of mind and relaxation. When I go to Japan everybody is talking about how awaken their energy. If I go to England, they ask which yoga they should practise for blood pressure, sciatica, multiple sclerosis. When I meet Indians, they ask me which yoga to practise in order to think more about God. When I go to the Soviet Union they ask which yoga to practise to develop telepathy and clairvoyance. So, different people want to practise yoga for different purposes, according to their desire and according to their need.

Is the position of the body in meditation important?

To begin with, the spine has to be upright and straight and any comfortable posture will do. Later, however, you must assume a very important posture. Press the perineum with one heel and press the abdominal viscera with the other heel. The perineum and abdominal viscera are two important centres which send disturbing influxes to the mind. If they are properly pressed there will be less disturbance. In yoga this is known as siddhasana. It is the posture for meditation and it is easy. One can even maintain this posture for three hours after some months of practice. A beginner can do fifteen minutes without any difficulty.

The yogic postures, do they function because one used consciousness or awareness, or would they have results without your being conscious of what you do?

Yoga postures are designed from animal postures. In each incarnation of an animal there has been a continual stress on a particular glandular system that the yogis have seen or observed. Every creature, every being, in one particular incarnation, continues to be in that physical body, creating stress on one particular limb, organ or hormone and thereby

evolution takes place. There are certain secretions and other factors which are special to that incarnation.

When you practise yoga postures in the form of gymnastic exercises, in a dynamic way, then they will have only that effect, but in the yogic system that particular posture should be maintained for a period of time, and you must follow the system of breathing. When you follow the system of breathing, concentration automatically takes place. The terminology used is *yoga asana*. The word *yoga* is used here in the sense of union. When two things are connected it is called *yoga* which means that in this physical body there are two things which have to be connected.

In yogic philosophy they talk about the two forces in this physical body. One force is called life, that is *prana*, another force is called mind or consciousness and, of course, everybody can understand it. We are functioning and alive because of these two forces. If one of these forces is withdrawn, then we can't function or we can't live, but these two forces are always in a state of disagreement or imbalance. When there is a disagreement, imbalance or discord between these two forces, then the mental or physical problems take place. So, when you are maintaining a particular posture you are trying to unite these two forces of the mind on one harmonious level.

When you maintain that posture for some time you are exerting pressure on a particular gland of the body. There are two types of glands in this physical body according to modern science. According to yoga there are three types of glands: endocrine glands, exocrine glands and energy system. A blockage can occur in one of these three systems. Endocrine glands can be blocked: when insulin is blocked you get diabetes, when adrenaline is blocked you get asthma. In the same way, you have exocrine glands. These exocrine glands are responsible for the biochemical structure of the body, like saliva, hydrochloric acid, enzymes, etc. Third is energy. This energy can also get blocked and this energy block can also create mental, physical and

emotional problems. When you maintain the posture for a particular period of time, then one, two or three blocks of the endocrine, exocrine and energy systems are removed. Therefore it is not only concentration, but also position.

It was mentioned that meditation and concentration are important for a person. Can you explain a method or a way to follow these?

Thank you very much for this question. Anyone who has to go deep into meditation has to start from exoteric practices, because the body is the basis. Finer than the body are the senses. Finer than the senses is the mind. Finer than the mind is the intellect. Finer than the intellect is emotion. Finer than emotion is ego. This ego is of two kinds: lower ego and higher ego. You know Socrates used to say, “Know yourself”; he meant the higher self.

On this basis, meditation has to start. First one should practise yoga postures, then pranayama or breathing. Both the practices can take more than twenty minutes. Then one should choose for oneself one or two practices in which the mind and the senses are separated. In other words, the mind should be isolated. It is a prerequisite for concentration and meditation that mind should be isolated. If the mind is constantly fed by the stimuli of the senses from outside, it cannot concentrate, just as the flame of the candle cannot become steady and straight as long as there is a wind blowing; so you close all the windows, that’s all.

So, first of all the senses must be hypnotized. I’m using the word hypnotize, don’t mind it. There are practices like chanting, certain mudras and bandhas, certain forms of concentration: on object, on light, on sound, whereby the senses are numbed for the time being. When mind is isolated it does not receive external sensations and perceptions, then, at that time, one should select for oneself one practice of concentration.

Concentration means fixing the mind on an object for a particular period of time, say for about five minutes. Out of

the five minutes, the mind will be concentrated maybe for half a minute because, even if the mind is isolated, it has its subjective experiences. You have plugged the external perceptions, but what about the internal perceptions? By the practice of concentration you plug those internal experiences also. This continues and continues, and suddenly it turns into meditation.

In meditation there is only awareness of the object. There is no awareness of ego. There is no awareness of time and space. Just that particular object on which you have been concentrating becomes very clear. In this, one of the easiest of the practices is concentration on your own breath. It is easiest because you don't have to do it, for you are always breathing, twenty-four hours, you just have to add one more thing – awareness that you are breathing. You are breathing for twenty-four hours, but you don't know it. With your eyes closed, for ten minutes you have to become very aware that you are breathing.

By fixing your inner gaze at the tip of your nose, just witness the natural flow of the breath. Start with five minutes, then start counting. Count in reverse order for some time, it can be ten minutes, fix a time for yourself. In ten minutes you breathe one hundred and fifty times – a hundred and fifty, a hundred and forty-nine, a hundred and forty-eight, continuing backwards to one. If you happen to forget the sequence of numbers somewhere in between, which usually happens because when the concentration begins you suddenly miss a number, you start again from a hundred and fifty. You must make a resolve, “From a hundred and fifty to one I will count and see my breath and know each and every number.” If a hundred and fifty is a bit difficult, start with seventy-five.

When this is done, you start with sound. You develop the concept of a sound with the breath. The sound should be practised in two ways: the sound of inhaling the breath is *So* and the exhaling breath *Ham*. That is how you must feel. So you maintain a steady stream of awareness: *So-ham*,

while you are following the breath. The same concept can be reversed, when you are breathing out it is *Ham* and when you are breathing in it is *So*. It is *Ham-so, Ham-so*. It is the same thing, you are only changing the order of your concept.

By the time you are practising this, if concentration begins to take place, you begin to see some sort of visions. The moment you begin to see the visions, stop the practice, concentrate in the middle of the eyebrows. At this time you must try to visualize one particular symbol, one particular thing or one particular object which you have already chosen for yourself. With that your meditation begins.

This is just one technique which I have spoken about. There are many techniques, each according to the individual.



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The Purpose of Yoga, Yoga Practices

Volos Club: Exoraistiki Leski Volou, 12 May 1984

I am not an Indian ambassador; I am an ambassador of yoga. I carry the message and science of yoga to the most remote corners of the world and I have discovered that, in every country, everybody knows about yoga. They know that through the practices of yoga one can feel healthier and one can be happier and stronger.

International responses to yoga

The Soviet people feel that through the practices of yoga you can develop your psychic powers. Americans think that by the practices of yoga you can relax and control your stress. People in the United Kingdom and European countries believe you can cure chronic diseases. The Japanese believe you can train your body, mind and emotions, and then with the trained body, mind and emotions you can pray successfully. They feel that if you are not disciplined physically, mentally and emotionally, your prayers are superficial. In Australia, people believe that through yoga you can experience more happiness from this life.

In India people believe all these. They believe that through one form of yoga you can cure diseases, by another form of yoga you can develop your mental powers, with another form you can pray successfully and with yet another

form of yoga you can relax the mind, emotions and body. Indians believe that yoga can be practised for many reasons, but they believe that all these are not the object of yoga. If yoga can cure your body, it is incidental. If yoga can relax your mind and give you tranquillity of mind, it is a by-product. All these can not be the object and aim of yoga. Therefore, the question arises: What is the aim of yoga? Why should one practise yoga?

What is the purpose of yoga?

If you are ill you practise yoga, if your mind is dissipated, confused and tired, you practise yoga, if your personality is not normal and balanced you practise yoga, or if you want to develop your psychic power or willpower you practise yoga, but since these are not the object of yoga, then what is the object?

For many thousands of years in India, the wise men have used yoga for one definite purpose. Many centuries ago a wise man said, "Know thyself." He was a wise man from Greece and he is immortal in the hearts of sincere seekers of yoga. His philosophy ran parallel with the Vedantic philosophy of India. He did not say, "Know the body", he did not say, "Know the mind", he did not say, "Know this or that", he said, "Know thyself."

This question, this interrogation, baffled the contemporary intellectuals of Greece. Many of them did not know what this crazy man was talking about. What happened to Socrates you know very well, but the question which he put is an eternal question. If you are a thinker, you must think about this question. If you are a person with a contemplative mind, you must put these questions to yourself: "Who am I? Am I this body? That means that the body is my last and only definition, and when I die I am finished. Am I this mind? Am I something beyond the body and mind? Am I just matter and nothing more than matter?"

Behind this body, behind this mind, behind this external, empirical consciousness, there is a higher and greater

consciousness in you and that consciousness is known by various names. Some call it the self. The Upanishads called that *atma*. Some people call it super ego. People call it different names. That is the main object for which yoga is practised.

Union with the self

There are various forms of yoga. *Yoga* literally means 'union', 'connection' or 'merging of two objects into one.' When the river merges into the ocean, that act is yoga. When you mix sugar in your tea and it mixes completely, that is called yoga. Or when you put on the connection of the switch and the lines join together, positive and negative, that is called yoga. Therefore yoga must be properly defined.

In this whole universe there are two realities. One is called the transcendental and the other is known as empirical. The empirical self is known as the little self or individual self. Then there is the transcendental, cosmic or universal Self. Well, all these are just names. There is something absolute and there is something relative. There is something homogeneous and there is something individual. You are individual. You are an individual soul. Just as electrical energy is individualized in this microphone or in this light, in the same way, the eternal, transcendental, cosmic or universal energy is individualized in each and every form through a process of ego.

There is a force called ego which is an individual force and therefore the individual is the empirical self. When your individual consciousness merges with the universal consciousness, that is yoga. Or I will make it more simple: when your little mind merges with the greater mind, that is yoga. Or when this little man merges with the Cosmic Consciousness, that is yoga. This is the literal meaning and definition of yoga.

How to practise yoga

Then the question comes: How to practise it? There are various forms of yoga and if I have time I will talk to you

about them, but in all the forms of yoga there is one process involved. You can practise any yoga from any teacher, any guru or any sect, however only one process is involved. When your mind is withdrawn for some time from external objects to an internal object, that is the process of yoga.

The mind is projected outside, the mind receives cognition, perception and knowledge through the five senses and from the objects. This is called external knowledge. This is called objective knowledge. This is known in philosophy as empirical knowledge. The five senses are the nose, eyes, tongue, ears and skin. The mind relates itself with the five senses, then cognition, perception or knowledge takes place. This knowledge which you get every day, from morning to night, is dependent on the relationship between the mind, the senses and the object. If there is any dislocation in any of these three, knowledge will not take place, perception will not take place, not cognition.

This knowledge is called relative knowledge. You can say empirical knowledge, finite or objective knowledge. This is not yoga. You have to turn to the other side; the mind which was turning out toward the objects must be turned inward. All the senses, all the windows, all the doors, must be closed. Do it by any means. Any guru will teach you. Any teacher will tell you. Of course, every guru will tell you different methods, but there is no harm in it.

The process of going in is one thing and the tools or methods which you use can be anything; these techniques are called the practices of yoga. They are called karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga, kundalini yoga, kriya yoga, mantra yoga, hatha yoga. I am just telling you half a dozen of them; there can be as many yogas as there are people. Some gurus teach bhakti yoga; if it suits you, do it. Some teachers teach raja yoga; if it is suitable, if it agrees with your temperament, do it.

These techniques of yoga appear to be different from each other. One guru will emphasize mantra, another guru will emphasize pranayama and the two disciples will fight

with one another. One says, “My guru says pranayama”, and the other says, “My guru says mantra”, and they keep on fighting because they do not know what yoga is.

Yoga is a process. You want to climb up to the terrace. You can have a staircase, but if you don’t have a staircase, you have to put a bench, a stool or something like that and climb up that way.

Your own path

When you are trying to go in you face a lot of difficulties, and these difficulties are related to your own mind. It is like crossing the East German wall – you can’t! The mind will not allow you because this mind is so gross. It is so dissipated. You try to concentrate and at once the concentration breaks. You want to fix your mind on one point and the mind will wander throughout. When you are practising the mantra you will find that the mind is thinking about something else.

These are some of the difficulties related to mind, body and emotions. Therefore, the practice of yoga should be chosen according to the gravity of your problem. In the science of yoga they deal with the mind very systematically. When you are able to calm down the mind, then you have inner experiences, because beyond the conscious is the subconscious mind. Deeper than the subconscious mind is the unconscious mind and therefore you have to go deep into yourself. You have to transcend the external experience. When you are able to transcend the external experience, then the inner experiences begins. Therefore, when you want to practise yoga, you must find a process or a technique for yourself. There are a few important techniques of yoga and these can be made common to most practitioners.

Hatha yoga cleansing practices

Now, the basic philosophy of yoga. In yoga they say that this physical body is a composition of two forces known as the life force and the mental force. These two forces are always in conflict with each other. There is no harmony, no concord,

between the life force and the mental force, and therefore either your mind is disturbed or your life force is disturbed. If you can create a balance between these two forces, then automatically one-pointedness will come to you. Therefore, the first practice you should do is the practice of hatha yoga.

The hatha yoga practices, perhaps you know, are the postures and breathing practices. They are known as asana and pranayama, but in hatha yoga there are also six systems of purification of the physical body because a practitioner of yoga, a practitioner of meditation and mantra, who wants to sit half an hour or one hour quietly, must have a pure body.

In this physical body there are three humours: phlegm, gas and acidity, so these three must be purified. When the body is purified, then your meditation is far better and far deeper, so a practitioner of yoga must purify the physical elements of his body in the beginning. The six systems of purification of hatha yoga can be learnt from any expert teacher. You do not need a realized guru for that, but he should be an experienced teacher. When you are practising hatha yoga you should start with concentration. It can be done with the help of pranayama. There are three practices of pranayama which I will tell you about now.

First practice

The easiest, finest and best practice of pranayama is to concentrate on your own natural breath. Do it for ten minutes every day. You have to do nothing else. Sit down quietly. Close your eyes, spine upright and straight, hands in the proper position. Fix your mind on the tip of the nose, just watch your breath going in and out, nothing else – natural breath.

If possible count: in and out – one, and in ten minutes it will be a hundred and fifty. When you have finished one hundred and fifty you will see by your watch that it was ten minutes. Keep on doing this. In the course of time you will see that you will take, not one hundred and fifty,

but one hundred and thirty breaths in ten minutes. As the mind becomes quieter, the breath flows slower and slower. When the mind becomes agitated the breath flows faster and faster. Sometimes it can be one hundred and sixty or one hundred and seventy, and maybe, if you are very good at it, it can come down to one hundred and ten. When in ten minutes your breath is only flowing one hundred times in ten minutes, more or less, then you must start another practise.

Practice a mantra, a sound: *So* with inhalation, *Ham* with exhalation. *So-ham*, with the ingoing and outgoing breath. You must feel as if you are repeating *So-ham*, *So-ham*, or *Ham* and *So*, *Ham-so*. While you are doing this practice, gradually the breath becomes slower and slower, and when the breath becomes slow, the brain becomes slow. The speed of thought, the speed of mind becomes less and less. When the mind becomes tranquil and calm you begin to see some sort of visions, and when you begin to see the visions, at once you stop the practice. Don't continue. Immediately shift your mind from the tip of the nose to the centre of the eyebrows.

Concentration

In the middle of the eyebrows you practise concentration on one symbol that you have chosen for yourself. If it is a bright star, concentrate on it. If it is a full moon, concentrate on that. If it is a bright sun, concentrate on that. Whatever symbol you have chosen for yourself, at that time you must meditate, because now your mind has become capable of seeing the object clearly. Those psychic visions, those visions which you see, they prove that now your mind has become capable of visualizing the symbol. This is the easiest and best practice.

Second practice

Now, a little difficult and more powerful – with the left nostril inhale slowly. Stop the breath. Exhale through the right

nostril. Stop outside. Inhale through the right nostril. Stop the breath and exhale through the left nostril. This is one round. Just practise five rounds and no more.

There is a system of inhalation, retention and exhalation, retention. You will have to learn from your teacher with what subtleness, fineness or control you should inhale, retain and exhale. The ratio between inhalation and exhalation must be fixed, and while you are breathing in you will have to count. You can count one, two, three, four, or you can count with the help of the mantra. So, you repeat the mantra three times in inhalation and six times in exhalation.

This pranayama I am talking about is very powerful. After you have perfected, or after you have made your breathing process better, then you have to add three controls in the body. These should be practised while you are holding the breath. This is a very important rule in yoga, that when you stop the breath, inside or outside, you must do it with control of three portions, junctions or centres in the body: at the throat, at the navel and near the coccyx. When you contract these three centres you are using three controls. These three controls must be compulsorily practised when you are controlling the breath. After practising the five rounds, then you concentrate on your symbol.

Third practice

This also is very powerful. It can give you meditation very quickly, but it has rules and regulations about diet, etc. For the second practice there are a few do's and don'ts, in the third practice there are many. You must practise the lotus posture; that is called *padmasana*. Padmasana is a posture in which you must have seen Buddha seated. Then you must fix your fingers in a mudra, either on the knees or together, you must keep your body upright and straight, and close your eyes. Then start breathing fast. I did not say very fast, I said fast. If you find it difficult to breathe fast through both nostrils, you can do it with one of the two and go on breathing as long as you can: one minute, two, three, four,

five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten – well, go ahead. When you are not able to do any more, sit quietly.

Concentrate on your symbol. Concentrate on your centre, at the mid-eyebrow. It comes very fast, it stays a long time and you can go very deep. After a few months you breathe faster and in the course of these months, or years, you go faster, and then as fast as you can, only through the nostrils, not through the mouth, and without making a face and without shaking your body. The body has to be fixed; only the breath has to be faster and faster. Do it for as long as you can. Some people even practise it for half an hour and after half an hour they get samadhi for one hour. They forget everything. The object on which they are concentrating becomes very clear, like a flower.

This practice demands some rules and disciplines about food and about your habits in life. I am not going to tell you about those rules and regulations because you have to learn through a teacher. Just now I have given you a glimpse of how yoga helps you to go deep and maintain the light of your consciousness. There are therefore many important, useful and effective practices in yoga.

Yantra and mandala

Now, about the symbol. There are two types: mandala and yantra. When your symbol has a geometric form it is called yantra. These are geometric forms, like a triangle, or two triangles intersecting each other, or a circle. Yantras were known to all the cultures, to all the tribes of the past and these yantras are very serious, universal forces with which you can identify, or with which you can communicate, or with which you can connect yourself. Just as you have radioactive fields and electromagnetic fields, so you have a yantric field to which you can connect.

The other form of symbol is called mandala. It means a pictorial concept. The picture of your guru or a trident or a flower; the full moon or the sun, that is called mandala and this mandala is also of two types. One is the photographic

or pictorial mandala and the other is like a statue with three dimensions. There are hundreds and thousands of these mandalas. Some mandalas are human mandalas, some are animal mandalas. Some are part-animal and part-human, based on anthropomorphic and theriomorphic concepts of reality. It is a very deep subject and I am not going to go into details. When you concentrate on these symbols which you have selected for yourself, then you are finding a base or a way of going into your self.

The purpose of life

The self which Socrates talked about is nameless, it is formless. It is in you, but it is universal, it has no limitation. What is its form? Is it light? Is it sound? Is it knowledge? Well, you have to find out for yourself. Human life has been given to you for that purpose. The purpose of human life is to know the self. I should repeat it again. The purpose of human life is to realize the self and the purpose of yoga is to help you to realize the self.



35

What is Yoga?

Katerini Cultural Centre & Politistiko Kentro, 14 May 1984

Greece is the land of thinkers, philosophers and great men. It has inspired the whole world in general and western countries in particular, and has guided them in philosophical thinking. The philosophic and diplomatic relationship between Greece and India goes back many hundreds of years. I do not know how many people in this land know about the cultural, philosophic and diplomatic relationship between these two great countries.

Almost 2,300 years ago, when Alexander the Great returned from India, he brought with him his guru whose name was Kalyan. In Greece you call him Kolonos. For him, he established an ashram and wise men from Greece used to visit him from time to time. Also, when Alexander the Great went to India he took many wise men from Greece. With these wise men in his retinue, he met many gurus in India and discussed with them the problems of philosophy and the problems of spiritual experience.

It is from India that I come to your country. For thousands of years India has been the champion of spiritual thinking and philosophical doctrine. Indian people, Hindus, are very religious people like Christians, but there is a great philosophy which Hindus realized many thousands of years

ago, that the reality of the universe, the reality of creation, is inherent in every cell in everybody.

Socrates

In Greece, this philosophical thinking was expressed by one great wise man. There is a school of thinking which believes that mind is ultimate. There is another school of thinking which believes that the body is ultimate. For those who believe that the body is ultimate and those who believe that the mind is ultimate, there is one section or one type of philosophy. However, there are many people who think and who question, “Is the body ultimate and is the mind ultimate? Is this external experience which you have in your daily life ultimate? Is there anything beyond this?” When the great wise man Socrates said, “Know thyself”, many people and philosophers in this country were puzzled.

In this world there are two distinct philosophies. One group of thinkers believes that what you can experience through your senses, what you can understand in your mind, is all that there is. There is nothing beyond this and you should not worry about it. However, this view of the philosophers has been challenged from time to time by outstanding personalities and outstanding philosophers.

Prophets, great saints, wise men and seers were born from time to time to tell us that the physical experience, the sensual experience and the mental experience are not ultimate. All wise men, all saints, seers, avatars and all prophets talk about a transcendental experience or, you can even say, a divine experience, which means that objective experiences of everyday life are not the ultimate, are not the final and are not the highest experiences. There is another area of experience which you can have without the body, without the senses, without the mind and which is superior, which is higher and which is transcendental.

This higher experience has been known by various names. Some call it divine experience, some mystic experience. Others call it self experience. Buddha called

it nirvana. In yoga they call it samadhi and scientists call it timeless, spaceless, absolute experience. This is the experience every one of you should strive for.

In your life, for thirty years, you are having an experience which is not complete, which is not satisfying and which is not ultimate, and therefore many times some of us want to have a deeper, abiding and spiritual experience. This experience some say is external, some say is internal, but in any case I can tell you that this experience is not individual, it is universal. You are part of the universe. You are not a separate entity and the universe is not different from you, therefore the experience which you have within you is a universal experience or a cosmic experience.

Those people who search for this experience in an external entity are called religious people. Christians search for this experience in Christ, in God. Hindus search for this experience in Rama, Krishna, and *Om*. Those people who search for this experience within their own selves are called yogis. So, when Socrates said, "Know thyself", he meant that you should be a yogi. Many ways, many techniques, and many methods have been found, and have been practised in the past, but out of all these it has been said that the yogic method is the best, easiest, safest, surest and quickest.

Yoga

The question comes: What is yoga? Is it a religion? Is it a sect? Is it mysticism? Is it a path of heretics? Is it magic? Is it a black art? The definition of yoga is so scientific that even the science of today can understand it in its laboratories. *Yoga* literally means 'union'. *Yoga* means 'connection'. *Yoga* means 'merging'.

When two objects of opposite nature meet each other, that is yoga. The river meets the ocean and merges, that is yoga. In the same way, your small consciousness, your limited consciousness, your empirical consciousness joins universal consciousness, absolute consciousness and becomes one with that, that is yoga. Your little mind, your little ego,

your little consciousness, finds it very difficult to conceive, to think of or to visualize the universal consciousness. You represent individual consciousness or the limited or exoteric consciousness. When you try to withdraw your mind, your consciousness from objective experience, from external experience and make it internal, then yoga begins.

The search for inner experience

Socrates said, "Know thyself." The Hindus said in the Upanishads, "Know thyself." 2,500 years ago Buddha said, "You must know yourself." Many people in India used to ask Buddha how to overcome pain and suffering. Buddha used to give them just one reply, "You must attain nirvana." You must know how to shut your mind for some time, but how to shut the outer mind, how to stop the flow of external experiences for ten minutes and how to become aware of your inner self for some time?

You and many more people are trying to find a way. Humanity today, people in this century, throughout the world, are trying to find a way. Why did people take LSD? You can understand. They were trying to have an experience which is not objective, which is not empirical and which is not relative. Not only LSD, but people have been taking many other things in order to get out of this experience, in order to jump out of this consciousness and experience something higher.

Every year, millions of people come to India. What for? They don't go there for duties. They don't go there for night-clubs. They don't go there for anything else except for one thing; they know that in India the gurus can tell them the way and the technique by which you can experience beyond the empirical self, beyond the outer self, beyond the object. Thousands of people from Europe, thousands of people from Asia, millions of people from all over the world, come to India every year, but not to search for employment. When they want employment they go to America and Switzerland. When they want the way of knowing the self, that self which

Socrates indicated, they come to India. From this you can understand which way your humanity is trying to go. In spite of technology, in spite of the modern culture and civilization and in spite of stark materialism, millions of people today are searching for their self.

A way open for everyone

Whether you are young or old, married or not, male or female, everyone has the capacity, everyone has the possibility of having that deeper and abiding, higher and absolute experience if they try. This experience which you want to have is a part of the universal experience. It is a part of the cosmic experience. It is a part of timeless and spaceless experience.

Therefore, in India they have formulated a system known as yoga. It is designed for every sort of person, religious or not, disciplined or not, healthy or sick, Hindu or Christian, atheist or theist, with or without political belief or ideology. You may not even want the divine higher or noble experience, you may just like to improve the condition of the body and mind, or you may just like to improve the mental power and energy. Yoga is designed for every type, every temperament and every kind of person.

If you want to renounce life and become a monk, a heretic or a recluse, there is a yoga for you. If you want to improve the creative intelligence of the mind, there is a yoga for you. If you want to improve your memory, your willpower or your capacity to work, create, discover or innovate, there is a yoga for you. You may just want to be a very good householder, a good husband or an ideal wife, or maybe you want peace, amity, tranquillity, purity and understanding in your family; there is a yoga for you.

Individual practices

I am just giving you a very brief glimpse of possibilities, of the practices of yoga which you can enjoy in your daily life according to your requirements. There are four important

yogas intended for four types of people. For a person who is an out and out householder, a worldly type of person who just wants his family to live well, for him there is karma yoga. You practise karma yoga and you will find that the relationship between you and your family has improved.

For the people who want to improve their devotion for God, for guru, for a higher being, for them there is a yoga called bhakti yoga. It is a way by which you can direct your emotions towards divinity and God. Therefore, a devout Hindu, Muslim or Christian should practise bhakti yoga in order to improve the quality of devotion. Of course, you may be going to church, or you may pray at night, but God needs more than this. He needs you, not your mind. Your wife needs your true love. Your husband needs your true love. Your children need your true love. Just imagine what God needs from you. The way you give yourself is not love. It is a ritual. It is not truth. You have not been honest. Well, don't mind if I tell you that you have been a hypocrite. How to be a true lover? How to be a good devotee? You need training and for that you must practise bhakti yoga.

For people who want to control their mind, who want to improve their personality, their character and willpower, for them there is raja yoga. Raja yoga is a special yoga. It is supreme yoga. It is the most scientific, systematic and suitable yoga for the people of today. Why is it necessary for you? Because your minds are dissipated. You don't concentrate. You can't think on one topic for a period of time. Your mind is distracted every now and again. We people of today, in this century, are the people who have what we call a monkey mind. Have you seen a monkey? It is the most restless creature in the world. A monkey can never sit quiet. That is the type of mind our generation has and, as a result of this type of mind, we have so many problems.

Especially in the western countries people have a lot of mental problems. They go to mental hospitals for no reason because their minds are weak. There are so many mental hospitals in western countries that, when I came to the West,

I couldn't believe it. How can people go wrong mentally for nothing? Because our mind is undergoing stress all the time. Scientists have been telling us that tension, stress and strain is causing great damage to the minds of the people today. The science of raja yoga tells us how to control the mind or how to concentrate the mind, how to unite the dissipated energies of the mind.

Raja yoga is also necessary, useful for people who want to develop creative intelligence in themselves. Everybody has some sort of intelligence even if it is lying dormant. A carpenter, painter, artist, sculptor, writer or photographer; everyone has intelligence dormant in him, but he may not be able to develop his creative intelligence.

Meditation

In this way there are many different forms of yoga suitable for everybody, but every form of yoga should lead everybody to one point. That is called meditation. The ultimate goal of yoga is to prepare you for that. Meditation is an experience in which you begin to see the reality within yourself, but just by closing your eyes you can't meditate. Meditation is a science, it is a technique and, if you want to succeed in meditation, then you have to follow the system of yoga.

What is meditation? Is it concentration? My answer is no. Is it reflection or a deeper process of thinking? My answer is no. Is it becoming unconscious or entering into a state of auto-hypnosis? My answer is no. Then what is meditation? I will be able to tell you a little bit now, but it is necessary for you to study more about it.

Meditation is an outcome of one-pointedness. When your mind continuously thinks of one sound or one symbol or one form for a period of time meditation takes place. Therefore, for meditation you have three bases: sound, form and symbol. If you want to succeed in meditation you have to pick up one, two or all of these three bases.

A sound which is silent or a sound which is audible can be the basis of concentration. This sound is called *mantra*.

Mantra is not a holy word; mantra is the word. Sound is the basis for developing concentration. When you practise this mantra, this sound, the frequency of the mind increases. The sound basis for concentration is form, or mandala. The form of a man, of an animal, of man and animal combined together. This is not something which is unknown to Greek people. You know it. You have this in your Greek mythology. We call them anthropomorphic and theriomorphic forms on which you can start your concentration. The third basis for concentration is *yantra* or the geometrical formations. These geometrical formations are known as symbols.

The sound, the form and the symbol are what we call universal formations. In science you have symbols, in astrology you have symbols, this is everywhere. In physics, astrology or any form of science there is always a symbol denoting the nature of reality. Therefore, the form, the sound and the symbol relate with the whole cosmos.

The inner and outer universe

In physics how do you symbolize light? You denote it by a curve. In modern physics, how do you indicate time and space? If I ask you to draw a map or a picture of time, what do you do? How can you indicate time and space? Will you just draw your watch – numbers one, two, three, to twelve? No, time and space, and sound and light have their universal structure. These forms on which you concentrate are not imaginary, not just suppositions; they are connected with the whole universe. This is the one thing which people do not know. They talk about the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology and criticize them, but all these forms in Greek and Hindu mythology relate not only to one particular object, they relate to the whole universe.

One thing you must remember is that the universe is not different from you, it is in you. Whatever is in the universe is in you and is in me. Throughout the whole creation and everywhere, in everything, the whole of the universe is present in microscopic form. That means that you are the

cosmos in miniature. You are not different from the universe and the universe is not different from you.

In the same way, you are not different from God and God is not different from you. In the same way, I am not different from you and you are not different from me. The whole universe is like an atom, and by knowing yourself, you know the whole universe.

Going in

Now, how to go in? You know how to go out every day, I don't have to teach you that. How to go in? Pick up one of these three methods. Choose a sound for yourself. Everybody has a sound. You should discover that sound. Sit down once a day for ten minutes and practise that sound, and your mind will explode. You keep your mind moving. Don't worry about the mind, because the mind and the self are not the same.

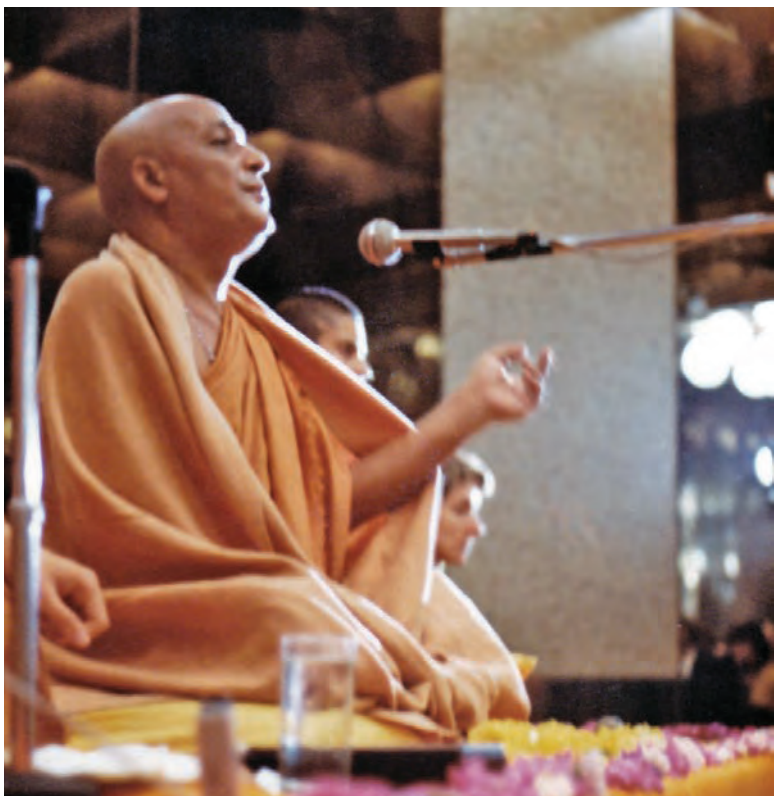
Mind is a different reality and the self, the *atma*, is a different reality. When you practise concentration, please don't worry about the mind. When you practise mantra, don't worry about the mind. Whatever practices of yoga you are doing, don't worry about the mind. Many people become very panicky when they practise a mantra because when they practise a sound their thoughts surge in them. Instead of thinking of the mantra they keep on wrestling, quarrelling and fighting with the mind, and after some time they lose interest.

I can tell you something from my experience. Practise your mantra mentally or out loud. Practise your mantra with the natural breath or with the deeper breath. Practise your mantra in one of the psychic centres of the body, with rhythm or without rhythm for ten minutes. When the mind troubles you, let it. Then you will find that after two months it will start getting better. Your concentration will grow and grow, and when your concentration begins to grow, then you will have psychic experiences.

These psychic experiences do not indicate that you have realized the self, but these psychic glimpses, these psychic

visions, indicate that you are improving. At the same time, let me tell you that there are various techniques of meditation, there are various techniques of concentration in yoga and every technique is very important as far as spiritual life is concerned.

People want to experience. They want to experience themselves. They want to experience bliss, peace and completeness, and this is precisely the reason why I am travelling in Greece. I've been to your country many times, but it is the first time to your town. I'm very happy that a small town like Katerini has so many people wanting to hear about yoga with rapt attention.



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Satsang

Hotel Nepheli, Thessaloniki, 16 May 1984

I don't really want to say anything, but I really want to let go. I want you to lead me and to understand.

Every day, for ten minutes, try to calm down your mind. Forget all your problems, all your anxieties, then you can be on the same frequency with my mind. When the frequencies of your mind and my mind are the same, then I can flow into you.

In fact, everybody should do it. This is the only way to communicate or be in touch with me. Ten minutes is nothing. In that ten minutes you can adopt any one powerful practice: mantra, bhastrika, pranayama, kirtan or any practice of concentration. Not all, only one, so that you keep your mind engaged and controlled. That's all you have to do.

How is it possible to keep the mind empty for ten minutes when thoughts keep coming? Can this be made the best time for repetition of mantra?

It can always be done if you can decide it properly. You must train the mind by suggesting that you can do something for twenty-three hours and fifty minutes, then be alone for ten minutes. There are very strong practices which can control the mind. Bhastrika pranayama can control the mind or by using any other pranayama you can control the mind for

some time. Some can control it by mantra also. There are milder practices, stronger practices and very strong practices.

How can we help mental patients? Can antar mouna help them overcome guilt and give philosophical comfort?

In yoga you do some practices in order to stimulate, excite or express your deeper consciousness. More and more thoughts come to you. They are very disturbing thoughts sometimes. Then, in the second stage you have to train the mind to observe them. When you witness your thoughts there is no problem, but when you feel them, then comes the mental problem. So, witnessing of the mind is done in three or four stages.

The first stage is to hear, witness or be attentive to all the sounds around you. Only be attentive to sounds like motorcars, knocking at the door, people talking, birds singing; that is, we accelerate the sensual awareness. In the second practice we bring a thought into the mind voluntarily and then stop it after some time. Bring another thought, think about it, then at one point, stop it. The third stage is when we allow every thought to come in and we go on thinking in the mind, “I think this”, “I think this”, “I think this”. These practices should be done only for a short period, maybe two or three minutes each.

After this, we should try to develop psychic visions. There are many ways in yoga in which you can develop psychic visions fast. These psychic visions, in the course of time, relax the mind, and sometimes while you are experiencing these psychic visions, the exact cause of the psychosis goes out. It is a chance, nothing is certain. Suppose you have a stomach ache, nausea or acidity. You take a purgative and go to the toilet one, two, three, four or five times. During that period of purging, maybe that which is causing the problem will go out. In the same way, psychosis, neuroses and schizophrenic diseases are caused by a process of thinking or just by one thought. Sometimes one may explode the whole thing. This is one way.

The second way is the process of jnana yoga. Most mental problems are due to the gap between religion, society and philosophy. I will give you just one example. Suppose today society decides that going to the toilet is a sin, or society decides that sleeping is a sin, it is bad. What will happen? We won't stop sleeping. Well, we can't, because it is natural. We won't stop going to the toilet, because it is necessary and natural, but we will hide it and in the course of time we will do it and we will have guilt about it, but we can't stop it.

In society there are many things which you like. There are many things which you can't stop. You do them and you feel guilty and you feel it is bad. You get angry and you are guilty about it; you have hatred, you feel guilty; you have passion, you feel guilty about it. These gaps eventually create a split personality.

Why are there so many problems in the West? The whole of the society is Christian society. They have certain beliefs which are rooted in the Bible, in their religion and in their culture, but in schools, colleges and universities they learn completely differently. What Freud tells me, your religion doesn't believe in. Religion says it is bad; Freud says it is good, so you are torn between two philosophies and that is why your girls and boys don't know what to do.

For one example, Freud says, "Sex gives good health." Religion says, "It is a sin, it is bad" The story of Adam and Eve you know, but here everybody is Adam and Eve now. In the course of time, the unconscious, that is the religion, and your life, which you are practising now, are deeply opposing each other. Deep in your mind you are a Christian. All the facts, all the faith of religion is inherent in you, but in society you live, act and behave as Freud has taught. Intellectually you can just squash it, but inside the mind there is confrontation because deep in your consciousness now you are forming two kinds of archetypes. One is the biblical archetype, another is the Freudian archetype, and they are in constant conflict with each other. That is why

there are so many mental problems in all the countries which are dominated by Christian theology.

India is very poor. We should have more mental cases, but we don't have them because we don't believe in sin. We are taught right from the beginning, from childhood, that eating, sleeping, fear and sex are natural. Mating, drinking and sexual interaction are natural. There is no harm in them, but if you can renounce them, well and good, it will be better. Therefore, there is no conflict inside the consciousness.

So, in order to improve the quality of these people it is necessary that you bring about what we call a kind of healthy dialogue between the religious conscience and the mundane conscience. It is also necessary that the concept of God be defined properly.

Western people have always considered God separately, other than oneself. It is necessary that the concept of God be related to the individual. Therefore, religion must have a twofold concept of divinity – God is transcendent, but He is also immanent. When you think God is there and God is here, then these mental problems can be resolved, because when God is here, He is also involved in what you are doing, He is involved in your idiosyncrasies. You must involve God in all the silly things that you do every day, then you feel very comfortable because you are not the only sinner, but He is also the sinner. You see, then the mind becomes very comfortable.

If you think that God is only there and that is why I am making mistakes here, you feel very uncomfortable, but when you commit a mistake with Him, then you share the mistake. He shares your mistake. This is basically the Eastern philosophy, especially the Indian philosophy. They say, "Why am I wrong? Don't you control me?" It's a prayer to God. "You control me, I am not free. Even if I do foolish things I am not free to do them. You are controlling me, why can't you control me properly? It means you like it. You want me to do this sin. It's your decision, then why should I be punished? You are making me do these things, so why

should I be punished?" That is the way to overcome the guilt and repentance. This is also how we can treat mental patients with yoga. There has to be a process of what we call giving them philosophical comfort.

I would like to hear more about hatha yoga. Mantra and raja yoga are maybe more time consuming for people in the West, that's why they are not as popular as hatha yoga.

Hatha yoga is a very important yoga. The first step in hatha yoga is to practise six techniques which purify the physical body. After these, you practise yoga postures and pranayama and when you are well-practised in these, you practise the *bandhas*, the controls in the body. After these, you should practise concentration of the mind. After you have achieved success in concentration of the mind, then you should concentrate on the *chakras* or psychic centres. Then you should practise some mudras which are very important for experiencing the awakening of kundalini. Finally, through the practice of hatha yoga, you can stop the mind completely.

Hatha yoga is a very important yoga, but it takes you only to that point where your mind hibernates. It can take you to consciousness, but not beyond. If you want to go beyond the unconscious mind, you have to take to raja yoga because hatha yoga is mainly concerned with the two flows of energy, the two forces in the body. That is the meaning of hatha yoga. *Ha* means the mental force, *tha* means the life force. They are also known as the lunar force and solar force. These two flows are physical, physiological material forces which flow within the framework of the spine. This force is then distributed throughout the body to each and every organ, through thousands and thousands of channels.

The purpose of hatha yoga is to purify these channels and make the forces function in complete harmony with each other. When there is disharmony between the mental force and the life force, then you have diseases. Imbalance between the mental force and the pranic force results in psychic, somatic or psychosomatic diseases.

Pranic force is responsible for physical actions like walking, talking, digestion, breathing, sneezing, coughing, etc. The mental force is responsible for the mental actions like thinking, seeing, remembering, smelling, understanding, cognizing, listening, tasting, etc. In this body you have two types of functions: physical and mental, but both these functions work in total interaction. In the lungs, in the heart, in sneezing, in coughing and in digestion both the forces are interacting.

If the prana becomes weak the physical functions deteriorate. If the mental force becomes weak, then the mental functions will deteriorate and both these functions are controlled by a centre in the brain. The controlling centre is the ajna chakra.

Ajna chakra means the centre of command. That means all the commands, all the mandates, all the orders to the different parts or functions in the body are given from that centre or chakra. Not only in human beings, but even in animals, the physical, the sensorial or the sub-mental functions are all controlled by ajna chakra. Therefore, in hatha yoga, concentration on ajna chakra, on the eyebrow centre, is considered to be most powerful and necessary.

The six systems or techniques of purification are completely necessary. One practice is called neti, which washes the nasal orifice and passage. It is done with warm water, with cold water, with saline water, with oil and butter. There are many ways of cleaning according to the nature of the disease. Some practices are therapeutic and some of the practices are just purificatory. The second practice is called dhauti, cleaning the stomach and intestines.

The third practice is called basti. It is a practice by which you treat the large intestine, if infected it can be the cause of many diseases like fistula, piles and so forth. When the large intestine has a higher temperature it makes one passionate and sexual-minded because by sexual interaction you are releasing the heat. Of course sexual action is a natural metabolic action, but if you are able to practise basti the

large intestine will maintain a normal temperature. Then you don't have to go for sexual metabolism.

The fourth practice is kapalbhati for purifying the centres in the brain. It cleans the right hemisphere and the left hemisphere of the brain like a vacuum cleaner. That is the exact literal meaning of *kapalbhati* – vacuum cleaning of the brain. Fifth comes *trataka*. *Trataka* means concentration on one point without blinking the eyes. The last practice is *nauli* which means total control of the rectus abdomini. This rectus abdomini has to be strong. Even with premature ejaculation, this kriya is very helpful because it is increasing the resistance of the nervous system, controlling the excretory and reproductive systems.

So, these are the six systems of preliminary purification techniques. Traditionally, asana and pranayama should be practised only after these shatkarma practices, but your teacher should tell you which practice you should do; not all the practices are necessary for each individual. In short, this is about hatha yoga.

When we are hurt through the ego of another person, does this mean inside we too have an ego?

Yes, of course. Everybody lives with ego, not without ego. If you have no ego then you are either an idiot or you are a paramahansa.

I had a mantra which benefited me very much, but I lost faith in it and stopped it when I discovered by chance that it was the same as my son's, who has a different personality from myself. My mind is rational and also suspicious. I respect yoga, but I am critical about the people who represent it. I even get angry and I am very jealous. How can I become more flexible and soft? What can I do without mantra, mandala or yantra?

It is good that you are critical. It is through criticism that knowledge comes. Blind faith and blind belief is not good for evolution, but at the same time you should continue to be an

aspirant. If the mantra does not fulfil your faith, don't do it. I won't be angry, because I like you to question. Not because I am wrong, no, but you need to rationalize the whole thing and realize that I was right.

Belief and disbelief are states of your mind and both are necessary for rational and intellectual integrity. Now, I will tell you what you should do. You just chant the mantra *Om*. It is not a personal mantra, it is just impersonal, it is a general sound. You practise the mantra *Om* in any manner you like and if you don't want to practise the mantra, then you should practise something of hatha yoga. If you don't want to practise hatha yoga, then you should practise concentration on anything you like.

What I mean to say is that your belief and disbelief should not make you a loser. You may not like a particular shopkeeper. That's all right, but when you need to purchase something from the shop, you must go there. If you don't go there just because you don't like him, you will be the loser. Therefore the relationship between guru and disciple has to be based on some pragmatic points, on pragmatism.

Belief and disbelief should not be disturbed and, in my opinion, disbelief is a very temporary state of mind because if you can renounce a belief you can also renounce a disbelief because that is the nature of man. A person who is rational will go from disbelief to belief and belief to disbelief. However, there are people with closed minds. A person with an open mind will at any time renounce their disbelief.

Concentration is very necessary for your mental growth. If sometimes your teacher is not able to satisfy you, you should not mind. Maybe the teacher is not efficient or maybe you have a fat ego. It can be anything or it can be both because many times a man who has a fat ego considers the other person to be an idiot. So you have to come to a point of compromise with yourself and with your acceptance. Taking it for granted that your teacher is inefficient and that you have a fat ego, what should you do? It is better and safer to think this way, "I am egoistic and he is not inefficient"

Then you should approach what we call a rational humility. Anybody, anyone, who claims to be rational should also know how to be humble. By a rational process you can create humility in yourself.

Humility is not inferiority. Humility is not inferiority. I am repeating it and especially rational humility; it is a noble quality. A man who can think and a man who can analyze; if he can become aware of his rational limitations, he can accept that he has rational limitations. If he can accept, if he can believe that he also has rational limitations, he can become humble. “I can think very well, I know many things”, that is one way, called rational conviction, “But I don’t know everything, there are many things which I don’t know”, that is called rational humility. Rational conviction and rational humility must be blended together, then you become softer and more flexible.



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Satsang

Satyananda Ashram, Panorama, Thessaloniki, 6 May 1984

Recently in a satsang you said that the devotee should not consider that he is in God, but that God is in him. Could you speak to us more about this and how these two statements differ?

A devotee, a *bhakta*, should consider that God is in him. As he grows high in his devotion he begins to feel that he and God are one. A devotee feels three different relationships with God according to his evolution. As long as a devotee lives in the gross mind and on the gross plane, he considers himself different from God and he considers God different from him. When he grows in his devotion he begins to feel that he is a spark or aspect of God. Then, he begins to feel that God is in him. In the final consummation of bhakti, of devotion, this distinction between God and devotee is completely lost. In the final consummation of bhakti, God and his devotee are experienced as one.

In the Bible also there are statements. The first statement is, "Father is in Heaven." This means, different from me. The second statement is, "Thy kingdom come." That means that you are in me. The third statement is, "I and my Father are one". This is the experience of the highest culmination of bhakti. So, according to the state of devotion, you have the experience of your relationship with God.

If you think God is separate from you and you are separate from God, then you are in the very elementary stage. When you begin to feel that He is in you, then you are experiencing yoga. However, there comes a moment when this distinction, this duality is lost. Therefore there is no difference in the various statements that I make from time to time.

God is a very difficult question. Everybody thinks about Him according to his state of mind. That means your concept of God is in your own image. God should be considered as transcendent and immanent. Transcendent means beyond you and everything. He is beyond the mind. He is beyond the body. He is beyond the universe. That is called transcendent, but that is not the ultimate definition of God. God is immanent. He is omnipresent. He is in each and everything. Every atom of creation is permeated by divinity, and therefore, He is also in you. Therefore a *jnani*, a man of knowledge, a man of experience, considers God as being in him, but at the same time he prays to Him because He thinks He is transcendent as well.

There is a science of bhakti yoga which speaks about your relationship with the Divine. Your relationship with the Divine is bhakti yoga, but then you need not consider Him as something transcendental. You can consider Him as your friend. You can consider Him as your father or even as your lover, your beloved. You can establish any relationship with God. Many saints in the past considered God to be their husband. In India there was a lady saint called Mirabai, she considered Him to be her husband.

Therefore, you can express your emotions to God in any form you like, in any form you can. It is not important what you consider Him to be. The important thing is that what you consider Him to be should consume your whole mind. Whatever emotion you choose for God should be a powerful one. That emotion towards God which you have established should be able to consume the whole of your mind. Half of the mind to God and half of the mind to the world is fifty percent bhakti.

Just as fire burns paper, cotton and wooden fuel, in the same way love for God can make you forget all your problems. We go to the sanctum sanctorum, we go to the chapel and churches, but nothing happens. You can't forget any problem of your life at all. Why? Because your love for God is not true. Do you love God as much as you love your child? Do you love God as you love your boyfriend or your girlfriend? No, definitely no! If you loved God as much as you loved your nearest and dearest one, you would not come here, the people would go to you.

There are two forms of bhakti: the lower bhakti and the higher bhakti. The bhakti which you practise every day is the lower bhakti. Higher bhakti and jnana are one. What is jnana? Supreme knowledge, supreme experience, higher experience – that is called *jnana*. When you can give your heart, when you can give all your emotions, when you can give all your passions to God, then you start becoming a jnani. Therefore, in practising devotion, you must channel your emotional attitudes.

How many emotional attitudes are there, do you know? Parents love children, that is one emotional attitude. Friends love friends, that is another attitude. A passionate man loves a girl or a passionate girl loves a man, that is the third attitude. You hate somebody, you don't like him, that is also an emotional attitude. Now, you will have to find out how many emotional attitudes a human being has.

All these emotional attitudes which you have in your worldly life must be directed towards God. It is easy to pray, "You are my father, you are my mother, you are my friend, you are my this and you are my that." That is only lip service. If you feel for God as you feel for your wife and husband; or you feel for God at least as you feel for your enemy, everything will be solved.

What is the purpose of all this? To consume the mind, to forget the ego, to transcend oneself, to obtain the inner experience. Therefore the path of bhakti is very difficult. It is very easy to go to the sanctum sanctorum. You can go every

Sunday or Monday. It is easy to pray. It is easy to read the *Ramayana*, *Gita*, Koran or Bible. That is a different thing. That is good, but nothing beyond good. If you want something to happen in your life, you have to think in terms of true bhakti.

What is familiarity and how does it spoil a relationship?

Why do you ask me that question? You have that experience with your husband, with your life, with your children, with your people. Familiarity breeds contempt because the people who are familiar with each other are not perfect. If we are perfect, then familiarity would breed respect. If you live with your guru, who is perfect, you would not feel that. The husband is imperfect and so is the wife, and so there is that temptuous attitude. Therefore people who live together and are familiar with each other must be very careful in their personality.

What did Christ mean when he said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit”?

Christ said that people were blessed and fortunate who had certain qualities. Those people who are very humble, they are very great, therefore those people who are poor in spirit are humble people, they are not arrogant or egoistic. Then, when you practise bhakti and when you practise devotion, the mind withdraws itself and a time comes when you become mindless. When you become mindless, then the divine grace becomes perceptible.

Can you please talk about the relationship between guru and disciple?

Guru and disciple are two spiritual relationships and they have a very important duty towards each other. The disciple's duty is to strive to realize the higher experience through the instructions of the guru. In the same way, the duty of the guru is to guide his disciple during the spiritual journey. It is not a physical, emotional or social relationship. The spirit of the guru, the self of the guru, the self of the disciple, are in this relationship.

I have published a book in English, *Light on the Guru and Disciple Relationship*, which will soon, I hope, be translated into Greek and you should read that book because that speaks about many more things that should happen between guru and disciple.

Why is the spiritual path so difficult, especially in the beginning?

The nature of the mind is to keep outside. Even if the mind wants to look inside, your senses draw you to external experiences. The mind finds it very easy to have gross and objective experiences, but when you try to go inwards and when you try to peep into yourself, then the mind finds it very difficult because it is not used to it.

Please speak to us about your early stages in spiritual life.

I had my first spiritual experience when I was six years old and then it came to me again and again. I consulted everybody. Finally, a tantric yogini, a female yogi, came to our family. She gave me the necessary training in the path of yoga and tantra. After that, I decided to follow the spiritual path only because it was very important for me to find a guru for myself. I left my people and went in search of a guru.

I met many wise people, many saints and scholars, and finally I discovered my guru in Swami Sivananda. After that I resigned everything to him – that's all! I lived with him for twelve years. I travelled through the world as a beggar and a mendicant for about eight years and I have visited practically every place in the world. Now I do not feel any difference between higher experience and lower experience. I don't see that line of demarcation between this life and that life.

What is the real meaning of responsibility?

The real meaning of responsibility means to do what your mind thinks should be done. There is no ultimate form of responsibility. You have created a problem and you feel yourself responsible. The problem is created by you, the whole

drama is created by you, the whole mistake is made by you and then you try to create an idea of responsibility, therefore responsibility is an idea. Some people accept it, others don't.

My father gave me birth and he tells me that I have a responsibility towards him. I cannot accept it. Why did he create me at all? I did not ask him to do it. I was born out of his passion. If he would have been a brahmachari, I would not have been born. So, responsibility is a very illogical social concept. Children think their parents are responsible and parents think the children are responsible. The husband tells the wife she is responsible, the wife tells the husband he is responsible. The government says the citizens are responsible and the citizens say the government is responsible. It is a very good way of exploiting others. If you want to exploit your wife you say, "You have a responsibility towards the children."

The whole of life is lost in chasing the shadow. You never come to an ultimate point of responsibility. Where does your responsibility begin and where does it end? Therefore life has to be planned properly. This program of life accepts the idea of responsibility, even if it is a myth or even if it is exploitation.

For twenty-five years after the date of marriage you are responsible. It is too much. Twenty-five years is too much. You must say twenty years is enough responsibility, you can stretch it to another five years. So, you get married at the age of twenty. By forty-five you must renounce responsibilities. If you do not renounce them you will get sick. You will have blood pressure, heart problems, migraines, nervous breakdown or anything.

You must relax after twenty or twenty-five years. That is called planning of life. You go endlessly with this idea of responsibility until you are thrown into the grave. That is why there are so many mental problems and that is why there is so much conflict in the family and in society. Old people interfere too much. After forty-five you should not interfere with your family, but I know that you will not be able to do it because responsibility is a hypnotic mantra. It keeps you high in spirits,

it keeps your mind under constant stress and you like to feed your ego, therefore you say, "It is my responsibility."

Up to the point of marriage, children should not be told about responsibility, then they will have a normal psychological frame of mind. You go on brainwashing them from the age of twelve about responsibility and you indoctrinate them and so they have psychological problems. Childhood is for playing and freedom. Married life is for enjoyment and disillusionment!

After fifty years you must practise yoga. Go to an ashram and live there. Develop your spiritual knowledge, live a simple life and, if you happen to live until seventy-five, then you should become a sannyasin.

Once, my grandmother told me about this. I was planning to leave my family. My father agreed, my mother agreed, my grandmother said, "But you have not completed your responsibilities," I said, "What responsibilities? Should I marry?" She told me, "Marriage is also a responsibility." I told her, "I don't agree. My father has fulfilled that responsibility and now you are multiplying the responsibility."

Could you please tell us about the time you spent in isolation?

I spent nine months in total isolation. I never saw any man's face, did not see a bird, did not see a tree, did not see the sun and moon. Do you know where it is? I will tell you the story.

I went to a place in the Himalayas which is the origin of the Ganges river. It is about four thousand feet above sea level. There is snow always. Ganges water is very cold there. Many yogis, many swamis, many sannyasins live there during the months from March to September. After September they come down a bit to a warmer place. When they went down to a warmer place I stayed there all by myself.

I had rooms and a fireplace. I had collected a lot of firewood to last for nine months. I had also collected potatoes,

wheat flour and a few things that could be preserved, like sugar. I wanted to do the special practices or the prolonged practices of pranayama. For a little bit of pranayama every place is all right, but if you want to practise pranayama for many hours, then you must go to a very cool place, because pranayama creates heat in the body. The process of oxygenation in the body is accelerated and as a result the body can suffer if you practise too much pranayama in a hot place.

The yogis go to the Himalayas and there, in the high altitude, they practise pranayama. Further, there you don't have temptations. There is nothing, therefore you can't desire. So, I went to that place in order to practise pranayama for a prolonged period because I wanted to open the doors of the inner chamber. I wanted to see the inner experience outside.

In India we call it darshan. *Darshan* means to see your spiritual self outside. It can happen, it happens through the practices of pranayama because when you practise pranayama the mind is brought under total control. The mind stops functioning. You enter into a state of trance or samadhi. You enter into a state which is something like unconsciousness, but you are not unconscious, you are entering within yourself; your inner awareness is total.

During those nine months I practised pranayama. I lived in total isolation. I did not go out of my room at all. I did not take a bath for nine months. Can you imagine how difficult that is for an Indian? Indians must take a bath once every day, twice, thrice or even five times a day! I always lived in my lotus posture and practised pranayama.

Besides this long isolation of nine months, I have also practised some three days or four days in seclusion. Please don't try it!

Can you tell us about the tattwa shuddhi techniques and why the time for it is now?

Tattwa shuddhi is a tantric practice done in order to purify the elements of the body and the mind. The physical body is composed of five elements. The mind is composed of three

gunas. If the five elements and three gunas are not purified, experiencing meditation and higher experiences becomes very difficult. Therefore, before you take to any higher yogic practice, it is necessary that the constituents of the body, the five elements, be purified.

These five elements which constitute the body influence the mind also. They are: *akasha*, ether; *vayu*, air; *agni*, fire; *apas*, water and *prithvi*, earth. These five elements are the primordial elements of universal nature and, by a process of quintuplication, the whole world, the whole cosmos and the whole creation comes into being.

In the human body these five elements control the functions of various organs like eyes, nose, etc. Various functions in the body like respiration, circulation, excretion and so on, are controlled by the state of the five elements. These five elements are disintegrated and go back into their own source in the universe after the body is consigned to the fire. These five elements, when they are permuted and combined by a process of quintuplication, become many minor *tattwas* or elements. The purification of the tattwa is done by a process of mantra and yantra. After the purification has taken place you should practise meditation or any other practice you like.

Is it possible to arrive at supreme knowledge without the guidance of a guru? Is it possible to follow the spiritual path without the guidance of the guru?

For spiritual life the guru is a must, otherwise you will encounter too many difficulties. In fact, in the path of yoga, in the path of spiritual experience, a guru is a prerequisite. We are the people who are ignorant. We have so many limitations in our lives. We are not sure that what we are doing is right. We read from a book and then we put it into practice, but please remember that in books not everything is written. There are many details which are not written in the book. It is safer to travel in spiritual life with a guru, but many people don't like to have one; let them try it!

Can you explain the life of sannyasa and what a sannyasin is?

The literal meaning of *sannyasa* is 'total dedication'. Sannyasa is taken in order to achieve the higher experience of life. When we are sure that our spiritual aspirations are genuine, then we take to the path of sannyasa. Sannyasa is of two types: one for the householder and the other for those who don't want to become householders.

Those who are householders live the life of a sannyasin although they live as householders. That is called karma sannyasa. They don't renounce actions, they don't renounce family, they don't renounce relationships. They renounce the attachment, they renounce the identification, they renounce unnecessary neuroses, they disidentify from the fruits of action.

The karma sannyasins live like you, but in their own mind they are guided by a higher philosophy. They question: Why do I work? What is the purpose of life? What is the purpose of karma? What is the purpose of emotion and passion? How should I handle the results of life?

Every action produces a result. Love produces a result; hatred produces a result; success and failure produce a result or an effect. When you are happy or when you are unhappy it produces an effect. How should you handle that situation? A karma sannyasin does it. He tries to love as a householder and express, exhaust or finish his karma and he does not create more karma. By detachment, by disidentification, he stops the further process of karma. This is called karma sannyasa for householders and any householder, married or unmarried, young or old, can have karma sannyasa.

Then there is sannyasa. It is for those people who do not want to be householders. They do not want to own property, they do not want the positions of the world. They want to devote all the energies of the body, all the energies of the mind towards the achievement of that higher experience. Then they live with their guru. For at

least twelve years they serve their guru, they discipline themselves, they live a simple life, they live on a sattwic and frugal diet. They try to practise what I would call purity of mind. Then they wear this dress, geru, and by serving the guru they complete the cycle of their karma. After living with the guru for a particular period of time, at least twelve years, then they are free.

A sannyasin's life is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is with the guru, service of guru: discipline yourself, have experiences. Then keep on moving, travelling like a beggar; erase your ego, learn humility. People will insult you, people will not give you respect. They will see a man coming with a shaven head, a person coming in rags. They say, "Get out, don't come here." Some will say "He is a heretic." Somebody will say "He is CIA", somebody says "He is KGB." Like that, you will be a victim of suspicion from everybody. That is good training, because everybody wants respect; everybody wants honour; everybody wants to be welcomed. Therefore, they dress very well, they have a nice haircut, for they should look well no matter how dirty they are inside, up-to-date, tip-top gentlemen. However, a sannyasin does not live like that. He must train himself to shun respect and honour, only then will the fat ego will become slim.

The ego is the greatest enemy; the greatest enemy of a disciple, the greatest enemy of a devotee. We make many mistakes through ego, you know it. We are affected because we have ego. We have a nervous breakdown because we have ego.

After travelling like a beggar, a mendicant, for some time, then he must sit down at some place quietly and practise sadhana. He should practise incessant meditation. He should eat only once a day. He should not preach. He should not talk like a parrot all the time. He must learn. He must experience in meditation. Then something happens to him. He has a deeper experience. After that he is free, he can do what he likes. These are the four stages in the life of a sannyasin.

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Press Conference

Alexandroupolis, 17 May 1984

Can modern technological discoveries and life be incorporated into yoga?

Yes, the modern way of life and yoga can go hand in hand. Not only that, yoga is very important and very necessary, indispensable for modern life. Modern technology and modern civilization have caused stress, distress and many diseases. It has been found by scientists that, through the practices of yoga, these stresses can be minimized or can be helped.

Does yoga have any relationship with metaphysics and do metaphysical elements that exist in the various religions exist similarly in yoga?

Yoga is a practical science. It is a system of techniques and practices related to the body, emotions and various stages of mind. Yoga has a philosophy which is based on modern scientific principles so that modern science and yoga almost speak the same language. Yoga is not a religion and not a cult, and it is not only metaphysics. It mainly deals with the problems of the body, emotions, mind and the problem of your spiritual quest, if at all you have one.

Every science brings in something new which transcends existing theories, sciences and philosophies. Does yoga

as a science do that? Does it bring something new in and also does it have axioms, things that it accepts from the beginning as being correct?

Yoga has brought something very important for man today. It says that the root cause of man's restlessness lies within himself. So far people are attributing the cause of their suffering to the objective circumstances, but yoga has proved, by various studies, that the root cause is within one's own self. The second important thing which yoga has brought is that every person, whether he is a theist or an atheist, can grow in his life and in his spirit. This is something very important which yoga has attributed to the science of human growth. The third important thing that yoga has contributed is that, if you can concentrate your mind, you can influence the events of your life.

Yoga does not have any preconceived philosophy. Those who believe in religion and those who do not can practise yoga. Those who believe in morality and those who do not can practise yoga. Those who believe in higher spiritual life and those who do not can practise yoga. Therefore, it has no preconceived axioms or philosophy.

Can a person come to perfection through paths other than yoga?

So far, no path has brought man to perfection. There are only a few paths which we know. One is the path of religion; it has only caused wars and destruction. Second, we know about mysticism, it is very difficult for everybody. Third is philosophy; that is very abstract, everybody cannot understand it. The last one is yoga, which is easy.

You don't have to be intellectual to practise yoga. You don't even have to understand it, just like you take medicine from a doctor without it being necessary for you to understand it. The doctor knows about it, you don't have to know about it, you take it and you are benefited. In the same way, you have to practise yoga to get the benefits. It is not necessary for you to know about it intellectually or even rationally.

The source of yoga – is it the ascetics in any religion and gnosticism?

The source of yoga is man's own experience. Of course ascetics also practised yoga, gnostics also practised yoga, but it does not mean that they can be the source. By observation and study they found that the physical body and the mind have certain laws and certain systems, or a certain science. They found how the body is affected by hormones, the endocrine glands, the nervous system, how a restless mind causes nervous problems, and what type of mind the people who committed crimes or suicide had. It is on this basis of observation and study that the path of yoga gradually developed.

Do followers of yoga have problems in their contact and relations with the already existing state of things in society, which is a society full of contradictions?

That is the only speciality of yoga. Those who follow yoga purely have no problems with society because yoga accepts the whole range of evolution in man. The goal of yoga is perfection, but it accepts that an imperfect man is at some scale of evolution. Yoga wants everybody to become perfect, but at the same time it knows that it is not possible. However, it is possible that we grow. I start walking, you start walking and he starts walking.

In yoga, more important than growth is peace of mind. That's most important. Everybody needs peace of mind. A criminal, a clergyman, a multi-millionaire, a poor man – all want peace of mind. This peace of mind is the central note in yoga, therefore the question of expectation does not come.

Do the followers of yoga have neuroses?

Of course, why not? At different levels people have their own experiences. A man might be having what we call a physical problem. He practices yoga and he becomes healthy, but then he has mental problems, then he has a problem with

his personality. The practitioners of yoga belong to different scales of evolution, but after some time, when they are able to achieve good concentration of mind, they have no neuroses.

Why is yoga for vegetarianism?

There are various stages of yoga. In some forms of yoga there is no restriction, there is no regimentation, but if the patient is suffering from some disease, maybe arterial or some such disease, there are disciplines and restrictions. Those who want to practise pranayama for higher concentration, for them vegetarianism is a must. Therefore, according to the necessity, according to the need of the aspirant, some sort of disciplines are there.

Do you believe in what Maharshi and Rajneesh are doing because they are assuming an important position in the world today?

You are asking about Maharshi Mahesh Yogi and Acharya Rajneesh. Both of them have influenced the young and the modern generation to a very great extent. The idea of transcendental meditation initiated by Maharshi Mahesh Yogi has done such a wonderful job that many scientists throughout the world are working on the possibility of meditation therapy.

Formerly, people thought that meditation was for nuns, recluses or some sort of spiritual people. Now scientists are telling us that meditation is therapy of the mind, emotions and personality. Through meditation you can also improve your creative intelligence, your capacity to act and to innovate. It has inspired millions of people throughout the world.

Acharya Rajneesh has revolutionized the whole concept because people thought that if you want to go high in spiritual life you have to be sad, you have to be melancholic, you have to be quiet, you have to be pure, you have not to do this and not to do that. That is what we were thinking. That

meant the path of truth and enlightenment was only for a few people and not for everybody.

Through his initiation, he made it possible to make people believe that everybody can walk towards spiritual enlightenment. For that, one does not have to make a change in one's external life. Therefore, these two personalities have done very historic work for the welfare of humanity. That is, in brief, my opinion.



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Satsang

Satyanandashram, Kypseli, 20 May 1984

Please tell us what is the importance of discipline in becoming a sannyasin.

What is the meaning of sannyasa? It does not mean monk, it does not mean a recluse or a mendicant. Sannyasa is an entirely different concept from that which people have understood it to be. I will give you an example. Suppose you have two million drachmas in the bank in your name, the money belongs to you, you can spend it any way you like. One day an idea comes into your mind that this money should be used for, let us say, the promotion of music, so you create a trust and put all the money in the trust. It can only be spent for the promotion of music, but previously it was yours, you could spend it in any way. That is the concept of sannyasa. When a sannyasin realizes that his body, his mind, his intellect, his resources are for one particular purpose, then everything is solved. He begins to feel, "This body is not mine and everything I have is not mine." Then he becomes a sannyasin.

Coming to the point of discipline now, there are two forms of discipline: social discipline and spiritual discipline. If a sannyasin lives like a monk and follows only the external discipline without the inner discipline, then he is not a sannyasin, he is a monk. Discipline should be internal and it

should be a basic discipline. Sometimes people don't really understand this. They expect that sannyasa means the life of a puritan and they talk about eating, drinking and sleeping in a very peculiar way.

A sannyasin is purely dedicated to his guru and if he continues to follow that, then he can manage and maintain getting up at four o'clock. That is external discipline which he can follow if he likes; he need not follow it if he doesn't like it. I have seen many people who are mentally very disciplined, but in their external life they are totally confused. When you are able to discipline the forces of your mind and emotions; that discipline makes you a true sannyasin.

From the very beginning I framed one discipline for myself and that discipline was that I was aware; I tried to maintain perpetual awareness of my guru and my mind. That was my discipline. I did not care for discipline regarding food. I did not even maintain any discipline regarding my behaviour with others because I always considered those disciplines external. Initially I even had difficulty getting up in the morning. For over two years, when I was in the ashram at Rishikesh, I could not get up before nine o'clock. All efforts failed. All efforts made by myself or even my guru failed. Then I thought, "It is an external discipline."

Another thing that I came to understand was that discipline has to come through a form of crystallization. If you force disciplines, then you will have a lot of mental problems. What is crystallization? You decide for yourself a minimum discipline and that minimum discipline must be very, very easy. In fact, when you follow that discipline you should have no problems at all. Other forms of discipline you should not even think about because if you think that you are going to get up at four o'clock and you are not going to get angry, you are not going to fight, you are not going to steal, you will end up in a mental hospital from too much strain.

Just have one discipline. I will give you an example: “After I take my lunch, I will sit in vajrasana for three minutes.” This is a minimum discipline. It is not difficult at all, but in the course of time you will find that you cannot even do this because the mind is against discipline.

If the mind dislikes anything, it is discipline. Even this three minutes discipline which you have imposed on yourself and which is so easy, a time will come when your mind will not allow you to do it. However, once this minimum discipline is stabilized, then the crystallization takes place. You know what crystallization is? In elementary science you will have learned that crystallization takes place by creating one central point. This is how you make sugar crystals, alum crystals. First, we have to create the basic crystal, a very small one in the centre, and then everything comes towards it because that is the nature of the object. This is the nature of chemicals. That is also the nature of the human mind, but many times we try to impose discipline upon ourselves without creating a nucleus.

So, a sannyasin need not worry about discipline, he should only search for a minimum discipline as a nucleus, he should not think of anything else. In a few years you will find that every discipline is automatically happening. Therefore, you can have a minimum discipline for yourself.

How can we overcome jealousy?

People get angry because it is necessary sometimes, people become violent sometimes because it is necessary, but when people become jealous, I don't know what it is for. It does not give you anything.

Sometimes you have to become angry because, if you are not angry, the other man will beat you up. I have understood the role of anger, I have understood the role of violence, but I have not understood the role of jealousy and it is so unnecessary that it gives you nothing but restlessness of mind. That your neighbour has a better job, that causes jealousy; or that my guru gives him the little tea that he has

left in his cup; him, not me! These are very funny things that you encounter throughout life. I have found jealousy to be a universal fact and this causes a lot of unhappiness.

In the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali there is this very meaningful sutra. He says, "When you see a happy man you should make him your friend; when you see an unhappy man, a miserable man, you feel compassion and when you encounter a scoundrel or a man whom you don't like, ignore him." Therefore, you must develop four qualities towards four types of people. Friendship with a happy person because many times, when your friend becomes happy, you become jealous and sometimes when you see your friend suffering you are very happy, "Hmm, he deserves it, now he has to pay." No, you should feel compassion for him and when you see a person doing a meritorious or virtuous act, you should be glad. Jealousy is the outcome of petty-mindedness.

How can we get rid of lower desires?

Lower desires are not the opposite of higher desires; lower desires are the early form of higher desires. According to the laws of nature, first there is a lower desire, as you evolve you begin developing higher desires.

What is lower desire? This is a very difficult question because the definition of lower desire is according to your religion and your society. If I want to drink, is it lower desire or higher desire? If I want to have sexual intercourse, is it lower desire or higher desire? It is lower desire because that is how tradition has defined it. In fact, there is no absolute and ultimate definition of lower desire and there is no absolute definition of higher desire either because society, law and religion merely fix something as a standard for the time. What you consider to be higher desire, the Soviet Union will consider lower desire and you will be sent to a mental hospital. In the same way Hindus, Muslims, communists have their own standards. Therefore, one has to go with the quality of one's nature.

The quality of nature is called *dharma*. Dharma is not religion. According to your evolution there is a desire which is natural to you. A child desires toys; when he grows up he desires a wife and children. According to your evolution, the nature of your desire has changed, but then you cannot say that the desire of a child was bad or unnecessary. Therefore, before deciding what higher and lower desire is, you must first realize what your dharma is.

What is the quality of your nature? Are you a sensualist? Are you hyper-sensual, or are you a pacifist? Are you a greedy man or are you a contented person? According to your evolution you have certain desires. According to dharma you should fulfil them, you should not hate them. You must respect yourself. That is very important for everybody because many people read books, and then they begin to hate themselves. I get angry; that's my nature. That is my nature, but in the books it is said it is bad. Everybody says it is bad, but I know it is not. I will try to overcome this, if necessary, as I evolve.

During meditation, during mantra and at other times, many thoughts, lower thoughts as you call them, come into the mind. Let them come. Do not stop them, because you can't stop them. They will come to you in some form or the other. When a thought arises in the mind you must accept it. If you don't accept it, it will be suppressed, it will come again. It will keep on coming up for quite some time. Finally it will not come, it will be repressed. Then it will start coming in the form of personality errors and sickness, because lower desires and higher desires are a kind of force, like electricity.

I am always telling people that anything that is coming from the mind is a force. Emotion is energy, passion is energy, lower desire is energy, higher desire is energy. It is like electricity manifesting in the form of light. It can express itself in the form of heat, in the form of ultra-violet or other rays. Therefore you should never suffocate your lower desires, but you should be careful in enacting them because society will not accept it. Society has its own rules,

regulations, considerations and taboos so you must make a compromise and make friends with your worldly desires also.

I have seen and experienced two types of feelings that we generate in relation to these two types of desires. When higher desires come into the mind we are so happy and when lower desires come into the mind we feel so miserable. These are the two types of reactions we have towards our own personality. My point of view is that we should not hate lower desires at all. In the course of time they will transform into noble desires because the lower desire is a force which can be channelled towards a constructive project.

It is very difficult for people to make a compromise. I know that even after hearing this, if lower thoughts come into the mind tonight you will be miserable, because you have been told a million times about your thoughts. Statistics show that most of the people who go to mental hospitals are religious people because religion helps suppression and people with a religious frame of mind have, according to modern psychologists, greater intensity of repression. Religious people have a schizophrenic philosophy; this is lower and this is higher. Then they create a tension between the two, they want to have higher thoughts, yet here come the lower thoughts, so this split personality grows more and more. In the West you find these cases every day. There are so many mental cases because there are such very uncompromising definitions. Therefore, if you want to have a normal frame of mind, please drop the line of difference.

You do the same thing with your children too, “Do not do this, do not do this, this is bad, this is terrible!” You have created for your child an impossible ideal which he or she cannot fulfil. That is the reason why children become what we call schizophrenic.

Why is it not important for a sannyasin to do yogic sadhana like asana and pranayama, etc?

There are forms of yoga which are intended for householders. A householder keeps himself occupied or preoccupied with

his problems all the time, but when you become a sannyasin then you are not occupied at all: no worries, no children, no family, no office, so what happens? You face your mind. Householders do not face it because they are so preoccupied. They have to do so many things: earn money, go to the bank, go to the hospital, purchase medicines, go to the market. They are kept completely busy the whole day and night, and they therefore do not face the naked mind. That way they remain extrovert all the time.

A sannyasin does not have any of these preoccupations. He is facing his mind like a person facing a tiger in a room. Therefore a sannyasin has to preoccupy himself with karma yoga or service of guru. If he occupies himself with meditation he becomes introverted, then he develops a type of psychosis. The balance will be lost.

In the life of a householder there is balance. He is always extrovert the whole day and, when he practices yoga, he introverts himself and this creates a balance between extroversion and introversion. This is so with both a householder and a karma sannyasin, but a sannyasin will not be able to create a balance because his life is such that there is no extroversion at all.

In the Munger ashram I have experimented on both. In the beginning, all the people who came to take sannyasa and stay in the ashram would not be given any work. Even now I sometimes do this. These people run away from the ashram very quickly. They do not even live the life of a sannyasin. They put on coat and pants and disappear, because when they do sadhana they face their mind as you face a tiger in a closed room. The swamis to whom I give a lot of work, they stay with me for fourteen or fifteen years because when you work, when you do karma yoga, you do not face the tiger in the closed room.

According to the rules of sannyasa there are four stages: first, twelve years with guru and service; then, as a wandering monk, it depends – eight or ten years; third is solitude, seclusion and the practice of sadhana; the fourth stage comes

when there is nothing, no rules or regulations, you do as you like. It is then you can open an ashram or do what you like. So, these are four stages, out of which the first is at least twelve years service, karma yoga or hard work. Sometimes, when you are not well, you can do kunjal or neti and asanas, it's quite all right. However, for your spiritual evolution you must start with karma yoga, then you have to become a mendicant, wandering from place to place, then finally you sit for quiet meditation and samadhi.

How does the guru-disciple relationship express itself and how can the disciple help the guru's mission?

In ordinary human terms it is very difficult to say what would be the form of the relationship between guru and disciple, but everyone according to his evolution can manifest some sort of devotion, some sort of relationship between guru and disciple. Some consider the guru as their father and mother, some consider him as a higher divine being, some consider him as the dearest person, some consider him just as a teacher of higher sciences. I am only giving you these examples, but others can be given.

I think that, according to the evolution of the disciple, any type of relationship can be experienced with the guru. However, one thing has to be important in this relationship: whether the relationship is divine or empirical, it has to be able to consume your mind. If your relationship with the guru is not able to scrape duality from your mind, then that relationship is imperfect. You must have seen in the rainy season, when the light burns, the moths go with a driving force towards that light and they die there. That has to be the depth and intensity of the relationship. If this kind of relationship is established between the guru and the disciple, then the relationship acts as a great catalyst.

The real guru is within you, he is known as satguru. I can talk about him and you can listen, but you will not know him. The inner guru is far beyond our reach. Intellectually you cannot reach him. Even if you believe in him too much, still

you can't reach him, because the inner guru is not a subject of mind and outer understanding.

The external guru acts as a catalyst and explodes the experience of the inner guru. Duality should go. If the duality does not go then the inner guru does not manifest. What is duality? You must also know that. When the perception and the perceiver are seen differently, it's called duality. In duality there is subject and object all the time. In dreams you have duality because you are the seer of the dream. In external life, day-to-day life, there is always duality because you are the experiencer and the world is the experience. When your relationship with the guru becomes very intense, then you forget the duality for some time.

When duality begins to disappear for some time, for a short time there is a sort of imbalance. When you drink a little more alcohol you know some sort of imbalance is there, or when you take a drug like marijuana. The imbalance which is caused by the intense relationship between you and your guru is different, but it can be felt by every true disciple.

This imbalance which a true disciple experiences is a philosophic imbalance or sometimes it is an imbalance concerning your relationship with other people, or with the objects in your daily life. Sometimes you have a little problem with your family, sometimes you have a little problem with your previous beliefs, sometimes you have a problem with your attachments, but this is very temporary. If you can patiently wait, this imbalance will be settled.

Many times this causes great concern in the life of the disciple because you have one mind. When you give your whole mind to your guru then you have difficulty relating to others. If you give a little of your mind to your guru, a little to your job, a little to your friends and a little to the people you love, then there is a lot of dissipation. In ordinary life we can maintain this balance. You love your children, you love your husband, you give love to your wife, you relate with your friends and to your business and professional work, but

this balance is sometimes lost on account of this intensity of relationship between guru and disciple.

The disciple has nothing to do for his guru. Only one thing he has to accomplish: to perfect his love and relation to his guru. In this connection, whatever he does for the guru becomes an act of devotion. It is like this: when the mother is cooking lunch or dinner for her child it is also an act of love for her child. In the same way, when the disciple is working for his guru in any form, that is also an act of devotion or *bhakti*.

You have selfish actions and selfless actions. In the world all your actions are self-oriented, the actions for the guru are not self-oriented, they are devotion-oriented or dedication-oriented. When you work for your family and your friends there is an object, there is an aim, there is an idea behind it, but working for the guru is a sort of karma yoga. In fact this is also a very delicate subject because many times disciples become missionaries and then the real purpose is lost. The purpose is the dedication of your emotion.

The guru is aware of the disciple and is guiding him, however, is he conscious of the physical level?

This question can be answered in many different ways. Sometimes the guru leads his disciple physically and many times he can guide the disciple without any physical contact, and the guru is aware of the disciple even before the disciple comes to him.

There are four kinds of disciple, they approach them according to their type, therefore guru has four levels of awareness. Sometimes when people are in distress they approach a guru and become a disciple in order to get out of distress. Sometimes people wish for something in their life and they approach a guru for spiritual help. The third type of person goes to the guru with a desire for knowledge, they want to know many things about creation, many things about the universe, reality, the self, etc. The fourth type is the one who goes to the guru for nothing; he likes to go him, that's

all, and this is the type of disciple about whom the guru knows before the physical meeting.

About the first three categories of disciple: who approach in distress, with some motive or desire, or for knowledge, the guru is usually not aware. Sometimes you can be a combination: you can be in distress and you approach a guru, and at the same time you have very high devotion for him. The combination of first and last grade can make the guru aware of you before you see him.

Whichever type of disciple one is, if one has the fourth quality then one is already known to the guru before the first physical meeting. However, this fourth quality cannot be cultivated, it has to be in nature. Also, this has to be spontaneous and natural, because you cannot enact love and devotion. Love and devotion are expressions of man's inner purity. Our relationships with the people in the world are expressions of inner desires. Our external relationships with people belong to the range of avidya and our relationship with guru belongs to the range of vidya.



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Inauguration of Guru Poornima Seminar

Satyanandashram, Paiania, 29 June 1985

It was felt for a very long time that we must have an ashram in Europe. Yoga aspirants are now spread throughout Europe. I have been travelling here since 1968, but this is the first place where an ashram in its nearly strict sense is coming into existence.

A building does not make an ashram. Even the teaching of yoga does not make it an ashram. An ashram is not health a resort, it is not a monastery, it is not a church, it is not at all a sanctum sanctorum. It is a place where people work together and live together with a spirit of utter selflessness. In addition to selfless work, a minimum possible discipline is attached to ashrams. I have visited most countries in Eastern and Western Europe. There are very good yoga institutions or yoga schools existing everywhere, but I have a vision of my own about ashrams.

When I was nineteen I joined an ashram in India and that moulded my whole thinking and personality. What I have been able to give and what I have been able to create is not because I was qualified, but because ashram made me capable of performing that. My guru is well known all over the world as Swami Sivananda and he was beyond every sect, every religion and denomination. We disciples worked for the ashram day and night. It is exactly that idea of the

ashram which I carry in my mind all the time. Even if there are no sannyasins with shaved heads or with geru dress, still there can be an ashram.

It is the spirit of selflessness that makes an ashram. It is one-pointed devotion, dedication and sacrifice that creates an ashram. If one has an ulterior motive behind creating an ashram it will not be an ashram at all. Name and fame are not at all important, that is all vanity of all vanities, because in an ashram the totality of your dedication and devotion creates a divine atmosphere. "Let people come from every race and religion to my ashram." This is called universality of spirit and for this I was looking for many years.

Swami Sivamurti had to live in India and had to visit India several times. She could not possibly complain, "Oh, I have no money." Where there is a will, there is a way and there is money. Then I sent her to Australia because there we have the most prosperous tribe of ashrams, hundreds of swamis, thousands of karma sannyasins and tens of thousands of initiated disciples. There, a sannyasin can go to school with a shaved head and teach. I mean in a normal school, not a yoga school. I sent her to Australia and she lived in those ashrams for some time, then she had to accept the challenge of the Greek mentality.

Things should not be easy in life. Those who want easy success do not succeed ultimately. Anywhere, in any station, in any area of life, you must remember that challenge is the key to great success. It is not necessary for me to give you in detail the challenges she faced here for many years. Also, I will not tell the challenges I faced along with her. There is only one secret of meeting the challenges of life: one has to be sincere and one has to be innocent. Crooked people do meet the challenges of life for some time and do succeed, but it is only the innocent people, who are childlike, who can effectively meet every challenge.

In February this year she came to London and sought my permission to purchase this land and build the ashram here. In about one week she prepared the plan, tried to find out how

to raise the money to purchase it and it was done. Sometime in March she started the work of construction, and in June you are here and I am here. Only three days back when I was here, this hall was absent. It was non-existent. They were raising something here and it was all in a mess, only this week I am talking about it and today you are here. So, this means that sincerity and innocence is a contagious disease, and it is something which does not isolate you from others and does not isolate others from you. Therefore, there are many karma yogis who joined hands in order to bring this into shape today.

When I wrote to Swami Sivamurti from India, that I needed Shantiratna to come to India and commission the new computer which we have installed in the ashram, in spite of the heavy demand for him, he was sent there. I did not really need Shantiratna because I know computers myself. Swami Satsangi is a qualified computer operator, besides in Munger ashram there are so many qualified swamis as you know, but I wanted to hear from Swami Sivamurti, "I can send Shantiratna, but because I am preparing for Guru Poornima, it will not be possible."

Sacrifice

What is the definition of sacrifice? You have only two loaves of bread and somebody comes to you for them. If you give, that is called sacrifice. If you have ten loaves of bread and somebody comes for two loaves from you, and you give, it is not sacrifice, it is called charity. I don't want charity from my disciples, I need sacrifice, and she sacrificed a most important swami from this ashram right at the moment when she had to prepare this colossal organization.

I am not praising Swami Sivamurti, I am hitting at you, at everybody. Take it personally. One thing you must remember: a disciple has nothing to acquire and a guru has nothing to keep in the pocket. That is true, not only with the guru and disciple, but with everyone.

What did you bring when you were born? What will you take with you when you die? You are not those Egyptian

pharaohs taking gold with you. You will be put into a box. Then why do we insist on our personal acquisitions? Why is our sense of security based on something which is not permanent? It's one way of thinking that is important and not the things which one has.

Bliss

This is one of those occasions when I have come to open or inaugurate this ashram and this ashram is called 'True Bliss Ashram'. This is also very important for all of us to understand. The pleasures that are fleeting and temporary are not the truth. The happiness which you get from the world is relative, it is dependent on your friends, on money and other things, but there is a permanent state of experience called 'ananda'. *Ananda* is not felicity or ordinary happiness, it is a permanent state of experience which does not change at all.

You may have heard about a great saint called Saint Francis of Assisi, what type of life he led. Perhaps you would consider that to be unhappiness? You would consider that to be misery? No, it was not, because once you have attained that permanent state of mind, then nothing matters in life, and that permanent state of mind can be experienced only when you have experienced your self.

Knowledge of one's self is the ultimate way for that experience. You do not experience your body, certainly not. You don't experience your mind. You don't experience anything which is material. It is in the form of a sound, in the form of a transcendental feeling, in the form of void, or in the form of a universal experience.

I don't really know how I am going to explain that to you, but during that moment of experience, this man is not there. This is my limitation. The body is my limitation. The body is your limitation and you have created many more limitations. They are psychological limitations, emotional limitations, and these psychological and emotional limitations are experienced as 'I'. When you think 'I',

you think of the body, the name, the place, but beyond this there is another existence. That existence is known by different names: transcendental experience, paradise, heaven, nectar, immortality, God. It is an experience. It is for this that all of us are striving, therefore our sincerity must be directed to this purpose. Why do you practise sadhana? For this experience of ananda, and this true and ultimate and absolute state of experience is the goal of everybody.

International yoga

This ashram, which is now almost getting ready, with the good wishes of everybody, is dedicated to that purpose. I must tell you that I am not a religious preacher and I have never practised any religion in my life. I have never visited a temple or a church because I feel that I am everything. You keep on searching and searching for something for your whole lifetime, but ultimately you have to find it within. I am the centre and not the circumference. Man is not the circumference. Man is the centre and the universe is the circumference, and this is the point which I have been emphasizing every time.

I have never cared to denounce any religious path because I am an Indian. We are taught from early childhood that every religion is true. Every day in the morning, and every night, we chant a few lines which say that there are different paths to the same goal. Attitudes are different, inclinations are different and capabilities are different, and accordingly the paths are also different. Just because the paths are different does not mean that the destination will be different. Mankind, although divided by religions, is one. Mankind, divided by nationalities, is one. Mankind, divided by colours, is one. Therefore, the path which I am talking to you about is not the path to a particular religion, but it is the path for the whole of mankind.

I am sure that Swami Sivamurti and all the swamis who are working and who will be coming to the ashram will

remember this truth. The inmates in the ashram and guests should remember that this is not a place to judge. Here people come in order to achieve peace of mind. Here people come in order to shed the exhaustion of life. Swamis have come from Italy, England, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Colombia and from many places, and many more will be arriving tonight and tomorrow. Even as all the streams emerging from east, north, west and south ultimately merge and mingle with the ocean, in the same way, the swamis coming from so many different lands can mingle with me in Greece.

Continuing mission

All of you from other parts of Europe must know Greece has a great history and it has exercised the greatest influence on European culture and civilization for thousands of years. Even as the stream of knowledge flowed from Greece in historical times, in the same way let it flow now and let the message of yoga spread from Greece to the whole of Europe.

We in India know about Greece as one of our relatives. There was a time when India and Greece had very intimate relations. The most outstanding emperor of India was Ashoka the Great who built the Ashoka pillars throughout the country. He was the most powerful Indian emperor. He accepted the Buddhist way of life of non-violence. He sent missionaries to China, Japan, South-East Asia and the Middle East. He was half Indian and half Greek. His grandmother was from Greece and her name was Helena. She was the wife of the Indian Emperor Chandragupta.

Much before that, Alexander the Great came to India. He was a pupil of the great philosopher, mystic and thinker, Aristotle. When Alexander was in India there was a good exchange of letters between them on spiritual matters like yoga. Alexander was so much impressed that when he returned he brought back with him a guru whose name in Greek chronicles was cited as Kolynos.

I can go on endlessly about the connections between Greece and India, and these are not cock-and-bull stories.

I am citing from the chronicles which you can find in any library or museum. Therefore, I believe that yoga will be spread from Greece by the enthusiastic people throughout the West.

I have so many ashrams throughout the world that it will not be possible for me to come to Greece even once in ten years. Moreover, in India the work is growing so much that my presence there is required very much. Therefore, all those people who have come from various parts of Europe must remember that in the future, if at all, I might only come to Greece. That means I will come to Europe by visiting Greece. It may not be possible for me, although of course I will try, to visit any of the countries which I visited in the past.

Those of you who have not watched my personal life will not know that I can hardly get even three hours of sleep. I have to write so much, I have to read so much, I have to hear so much, I have to decide so much that it takes me from dawn to midnight. Most of you know me as a yoga teacher or as an expert in yoga, but you are not aware of my other side. There are hundreds of boys in India to whom I gave scholarships for education. This is my personal activity. I don't talk about it, but today I am talking. There are thousands of boys and girls to whom I give clothes to wear when they don't have any because that is my personal hobby. If somebody has to be operated on for appendix, or hydrocele, or gall bladder, or this or that, I have to decide how much I have to spend on them and that takes me time. I have to organize doctor, hospital, diagnosis, money, after-care, everything.

I keep my yoga activities completely separate; this is one part of my mind, that is what my guru told me to teach you. However, everybody has a hobby and my hobby takes so much time and money, and then if I stay in Greece, London or France, who is going to work? So far, I have not involved one of my disciples in this work. Not one disciple have I used for this purpose because this is my personal hobby. I take the money in my pocket and I give the money out of

my pocket; Munger ashram does not even know about it. My nearest disciples don't know about it and I consider that to be my yoga.

I don't want you to come into it, please no! I am not asking you for any assistance. I am not hinting for you to give me money, no. Where there is a will there is a way, there is money, everything. I am telling you this because I have already crossed the threshold of my sixty years and I must have some time for my own hobbies. So, next time we shall again meet in Greece.



41

Satsang

Satyanandashram, Paiania, 30 June 1985

When I am with you my mind becomes quiet, but I feel restless when I am away from you.

When you are in desert you always feel thirsty, but when you are near a tap you never feel thirsty. This is the nature of the mind. When you are closer to the point where you experience peace of mind, you are very quiet.

Can you be in an ashram and still attend church?

No problem, no problem! I can also go if I want. I don't need a passport or a ticket, I can go to a cinema. I can go to a tavern. I can go to a railway station. I can go to any country. I can read any book. I can read the Bible, I can read *The Imitation of Christ*. Religion or no religion is no barrier. Among sannyasins there are people who do not even believe in God, because they are free. On Sunday you can go to church, on Friday you can go to a mosque, on Monday you can go to a Hindu temple. No problem, they are all good places; they are not bad places.

I feel alone, separate from everyone, even though I am participating.

Does it happen all the time? Rarely. Don't worry.

Thank you.

A disciple, if he just gives thanks, it is not enough. He has to give himself. He should be a first-grade disciple, no English and no Italiano. I am quiet and you are quiet. That is the best.

Who is qualified for karma sannyasa?

In my opinion everyone is qualified to take karma sannyasa. There are no prerequisites, no qualifications as such, because you are a seeker. You are searching for a higher standard of life and experience. You are trying to go deep into your own self. You want to realize the inner spiritual life. Therefore, the question, “Who is qualified for karma sannyasa?” shouldn’t arise at all. Karma sannyasins only make one promise before their guru and this one promise is a very simple one: that I will always walk one step further and, even if I slip back a little, I will not retrace my steps.

A karma sannyasin is like that ant about which you might have heard in the parable. An ant was carrying a small piece of grain. It was trying to climb a wall. It fell down twenty times, but the twenty-first time the ant succeeded in climbing the wall with that little piece of grain. There are emotional ups and downs. Sometimes you are confused, depressions come from time to time. Many times you lose faith in your own self, but again you must regain it. You must never lose courage. Life should not defeat you. Problems should not destroy you. Loss of property, death of the nearest and dearest, betrayal by the best friend, nothing should make you lose heart.

Everybody has an infinite chance to improve and there is not just one life. There is not just one chance, but infinite chances. Grapes grow in one generation. In the next generation they are cultured by the scientists; better grapes can grow. In the next generation another culture can take place, you can have better quality grapes and a greater quantity of grapes in a minimum possible period. Even as it is with grapes, fruits and grains, so it is with human beings.

You know that agricultural scientists have improved the quality of grains, vegetables, fruits, poultry and cattle. Why not human beings? Human beings can also improve, if not in this chance, next chance, if not next, then next.

It is illogical to think that this is the last chance. It is very difficult for me to accept the idea that this is the last chance because in this universe, everything is indestructible. Matter is indestructible, energy is indestructible, universes are indestructible, comets are indestructible, planets and stars and asteroids are all indestructible. Everything in this universe only changes form and name, not the essence. I am not talking philosophy, I am talking physics. Remember, I am not talking philosophy or religion; it is science, physics. The total mass of the universe remains the same. The sun may die, the moon may be destroyed, your solar galaxies may be completely decimated, but the mass of the universe will not change even the millionth and trillionth of a milligram or gram, whatever you want to say, because the universe is not very big.

The form is very big. The names are many, the forms are many, but the essence of the universe is smaller than a point. It is so microscopic that you cannot see it with the eyes, you cannot see it with the mind, you cannot see it with a thought, you can't see with reasoning. You can only see when the mind is destroyed.

When the senses are withdrawn, when the mind and intellect are withdrawn, when ego is withdrawn, for a moment, everything vanishes. I die, you die. The whole thing, time and space, dies. At that time you can see the universe. Where? Outside or inside? Nobody can say, because there is no outside and there is no inside.

When I am here, then there is outside and there is inside, right? When I am no more, then where is inside and where is outside? You take a pitcher full of water and put it in a big water tank. Then there are two waters, water in the tank and water in the pitcher, but when the pitcher is destroyed, there are not two waters, there is only one water. Therefore,

this outside-inside is only in relation to the ego, the 'I', the *jivatman*, the individual self.

This is the one obligation of the karma sannyasin to his guru. He need not make a commitment that he will pay ten percent of his income to his guru. There is no religious commitment. The only commitment is, "Yes, I will take one step further."

How can we accept and learn to live with our desires? How can we avoid feeling guilty about them and learn to use them in order to transcend them?

It is a very small question, but the answer is not that easy. You cannot eliminate desires, it is not good. You should not eliminate desires, it is dangerous, but you should not have desires, otherwise you will be unhappy. Then what to do? Maybe you might jump from the frying pan into the fire? I can give you one suggestion.

This question has been answered in detail in the *Bhagavad Gita* and has also been answered in the *Yoga Vashishtha*. Those who say that desires must be renounced do not know the truth about spiritual life. Sometimes people undergo an intellectual exercise of renunciation of desires. They begin to think, "I don't want this. I should not have that." This is merely an intellectual process.

If you try to heighten your inner awareness, you will find that in course of time unnecessary desires are automatically falling away from you. Even as a serpent throws away its scales at the proper time, in the same way a yogi, without fighting his own desires, gives up unnecessary desires. You do not know which are necessary desires and which are unnecessary desires. In many religions they teach that desires must be renounced and most religious teachers and philosophers teach renunciation of desires, and thereby a kind of suppression sets into the personality. Therefore, those who want to be free from desires better try a positive method.

I have a different philosophy altogether. You must have desires and desires will bring you suffering. You must suffer,

because suffering will open your inner eyes; a man who has no desires has no suffering. A man who does not suffer cannot evolve spiritually. All saints have suffered. Christ was crucified, Socrates, you know what happened to him, Mahatma Gandhi was shot. There are so many examples I can give you.

Never be afraid of suffering. Physical suffering is necessary for physical purification, karma, but nobody likes suffering. Nobody wants it. Do you pray to God any day, "God, make me suffer"? Do you ever say this? A good husband, good wife, pretty children, a comfortable home, everything nice, no sickness, no quarrels, no divorce, no theft, no accident and perhaps no death. No, this is not the right way!

What do saints pray for? "God, give me more suffering so that I will remember you every minute of the day and night. God make me suffer more and more, physically, mentally and emotionally, so that my soul will analyze, so that my soul will enquire, so that my soul will then become more and then more self aware." Therefore those people who have suffered have reached the heights and therefore those nations who have suffered have also reached the heights.

Suffering makes you strong, right? But suffering is a product of desire. If you have no desire you have no suffering. Therefore, in my opinion, the person who has asked me the question should remember that I believe that one must have desires, but one thing you can do, you can dedicate your desire to a higher reality. You dedicate your desire to guru or God, "Let me have more money so that I can give something to my guru." "Let me have more money so that I can feed the hungry people." "Let me have more political power so that I can help many people." "Let me have more strength so that I can serve my wife, children and family."

How many types of desire do you have, tell me? Normally people have three types of desire: desire for wealth like money, property, car, house, building, farm, etc.; desire for sexual gratification, either from men or from women; desire

for progeny: children, tribe, race, nationality, so that all of us become Christians, or everywhere we will have Italians, Greeks or Indians. “May my tribe increase”, “May my nation become great”, “May my family prosper”. That’s all. These are the three types of desire.

There is a rare fourth type of desire which is a special one: power, name and fame, like Alexander had, or “May I become the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization, or President, or Prime minister of India or Greece or Italy or France.”

Now, if these four types of desire are eliminated through the process of yoga, then everything will be destroyed. Imagine a family, a city, imagine a country, imagine the whole world only happy. Of course it is not going to be, but if it happened I think there would be more problems. Therefore, nature or your God, has created suffering and for suffering you must have desires. You must desire to have a family, children, a nice home. You must desire to have a guru, you must have a desire to practise yoga and you must desire to have plenty of time to read sometimes, the Upanishads, *Gita*, philosophy, etc. Then you will come across a lot of suffering and this suffering will bring you nearer to your own self. If you don’t believe what I say, kindly read the lives of saints.

I am quite desperate about the ecological crisis in the world. Our food and environment are polluted, nature is destroyed and dying. Is there any hope for mankind or is the world becoming a very large slum for a far too large population heading towards a lack of even pure drinking water, and shortly thereafter towards death and extinction?

This is a very important question. For about a hundred and fifty to two hundred years, European countries could never think about it and consequently every part of nature was destroyed here. Not only external nature, but even internal nature. I am not a fanatic about ecology. First of all I am an Indian from a country where seventy percent of the

population are just existing, where nearly ninety percent of the country is heat and dust, not heat and dirt.

We believe in Ganga. We believe in the Himalayas. We believe in ashrams. We believe in meditation. We believe in a systematic worship of the Divine in many forms. Therefore, ecology is something which we do not really understand, but it is a part of our culture. It is important to understand that nature is as important as we think we are.

Modern man in general, and western man in particular, has become very arrogant and in his arrogance he has begun to think that he is the centre of the whole world. Whenever he likes he can shoot tigers, birds, leopards, crocodiles or anybody. Whenever he likes he makes laws, uproots the trees and brings in other types of buildings and factories because he thinks that everything in this world exists for him. Is it not arrogance?

You think that trees exist for us? You think that these peacocks, birds, creatures, reptiles, snakes and flowers exist for us? We come as a conqueror. We talk as a conqueror. We don't talk as a member of the whole of nature. The whole of nature is one family, the whole world is one country. Some live in forests, they are called tigers, leopards, kangaroos, etc., and we live in caves, we homo-sapiens. Somehow we became conquerors and we have tried our level best to destroy the intrinsic beauty of nature.

Food is an odd word today. You know, I brought my own rations from India. Oh, you may not believe it, because here there are chemicals in everything. Here your thought is also chemicalized. Our dress is awkward. Oh, don't be offended. Everything is awkward, but yet we are so proud of it. Therefore, scientists throughout the world are talking about a return to nature.

There is a natural way of living. First, spend more of your time outside, because that will give you more energy and freshness in the brain, lungs, heart and blood, and make your food free of chemicals. Try to develop biological food as we do in India. Exactly in the same way, try to meditate

every day for half an hour at least, because inner ecology and external ecology are both important.

Another mistake modern man in general and western man in particular makes is he thinks that he alone can think. He feels that he alone feels. He thinks that he alone knows, "Oh, birds, no, they cannot think." Do you know that scientific experiments have proved that trees can also see things like you and me? A tree is as intelligent as a human being, if not more so. Of course a tree is not as crooked as we are. There are enough scientific documents which go to prove this fact. The same is true about the animal kingdom and the same is true about everything. Even a block of stone has intelligence.

A stone boulder has intelligence, but what is intelligence? Your philosophy in the West has not explained what intelligence is. Even Greek philosophy has only gone up to intellect and reasoning. Of course you call it philosophy, but it has to be knowledge of the self, not the knowledge of the intellect and not the knowledge of the mind. Do you speak philosophy or do you talk theosophy? Knowledge of Divinity is theosophy and knowledge of the self is philosophy, but how far could that great philosopher Emmanuel Kant reach? Up to pure reasoning, that's all. He spoke about pure reason.

That is exactly the basis of the mistake in modern science. The modern scientists thought matter was inert. Up to the time of the great scientist Isaac Newton they thought that matter was matter, that's all. Of course scientists do not think that way today. Matter is not the ultimate form of the universe, matter is a form of energy. Scientists today talk about matter and energy. You know the famous equation $E=MC^2$? Even to this day the scientists are talking about matter, they are talking about energy, but what about intelligence? What about the spirit? What about the atma? What about the soul of a tree? What about the soul of matter? What about the soul of a bird, a buffalo, a cow, a donkey, a horse or a pony?

Do you think that man alone has a soul? It's ridiculous. Man alone has a soul? You think that this idiot man alone has a soul? This man who destroys his own brother has a soul? This man who divorces his beautiful wife for another girl has a soul? This man who develops nuclear bombs and explodes star wars has a soul? This man who goes to America and kills millions of Red Indians, finishes them off, has a soul? These trees which give you beautiful mangoes, oranges, lemons and olives have no soul? This beautiful river which brings you so much water, upon which you live and without which you die, has no soul? These horses which made you conquer right up to the Punjab in India have no soul? These cows which give you milk, butter and cheese have no soul? You adorable and worshipful two-legged creatures, human beings, you alone monopolize that soul?

So, the central point of ecology is that you will have to accept intelligence, *atma*, soul, spirit, in each and everything in this universe. Don't destroy nature. What is the definition of nature, do you know? Have you ever thought what the definition of nature is? That which comes up by itself, which develops by itself, which is created by itself; that is natural. What is created by you and me and them, it is not natural, it is artificial.

There are two great problems before humanity today. You will remember them. One, elimination of nuclear energy; two, establishment of ecological union. These two things are very important, other things are less so. They will solve most of the problems of humanity, but then it is only the yoga-minded people who will put it into practice. I told you I am not a fanatic about ecology. It is my culture, inheritance and heritage. We always believe that our ancestors were born and lived in deep dark forests, mountains and rivers and that my mother wore just one piece of cloth. 'My mother' means 5,000 or 10,000 years ago.

42

Satsang

Satyanandashram, Paiania, 1 July 1985

Could you speak a little about Guru Poornima and the meaning of Guru Paduka Poojan tomorrow?

When one is in search of a higher quality of life, then the first important thing is the guru. There are various forms of guru, he is an inspirer of spiritual life and at the same time he is the light himself. Every year, throughout the world, disciples gather on Guru Poornima day in order to get in tune with the inner guru. Many thousand gurus have been born on this planet in the last many thousand years. Most of them do not live in the physical body today, but their spiritual light is immortal and all-pervading.

Whether it is Krishna, Christ, Rama, Mohammed or any other guru, they are immortal. They did come in the physical body for a short span of time in order to inspire the ignorant people. Then they shed their physical bodies; they live everywhere.

Guru represents the full moon because guru represents the highest order of illumination for which a disciple is striving. What are we striving for? Are we striving for partial enlightenment or for total enlightenment? The full moon represents total enlightenment. The moon in yoga is known as soma, not the exterior moon but the interior moon.

In yoga there are two nadis known as ida and pingala, also known as sun and moon. Sun is *surya* and moon is *soma*. These are the two nadis about which you may have read in your studies of hatha yoga and kundalini yoga. When awakening of kundalini takes place, both the nadis are in total balance; *surya* and *soma* are both in balance. At that time kundalini passes through sushumna nadi and then in ajna chakra it sees total enlightenment.

This experience of total enlightenment in ajna chakra is symbolized by Guru Poornima. It is not just a religious celebration, therefore Guru Poornima belongs to each and everybody. It can come to you on any day. Tomorrow's Guru Poornima is a symbolic one, but the real Guru Poornima will be experienced by you when you experience enlightenment. That is not symbolic, but real.

On this symbolic Guru Poornima, disciples gather together to remember their guru. Just as you need a boatman or a sailor in order to take the boat across the river, in the same way one needs a guru in order to cross this great maya and this great world. These gurus have been the pathfinders. It is because of these gurus that you know there is a God, otherwise scientists say there is no God. There are invisible and transcendental things in life which are experienced by gurus and given to disciples.

How does one know when one is ready to take full sannyasa? I have desires but I feel the path calls me, so there is conflict.

Whenever you want to take sannyasa, you are ready. Sannyasa is not for perfect people, it is for those who want to make their life spiritually dynamic. You think that after sannyasa you will not face passions? If you think this you are the biggest fool. You think that after sannyasa you will have no jealousy, no anger, no greed? You think that you will ever become an empty state? Oh, you are thinking of Utopia.

Sannyasa means accepting the challenges of life and fighting it. The ordinary man surrenders. A sannyasin does

not surrender. He has problems, he has desires, he has passions, he has everything that everybody has, but he forges ahead. If he is like a bulldozer, he will make way.

You remember the story of Buddha? Have you read about the life of Christ? Christ was the Son of God who was tempted by Satan. The Son of God is tempted by Satan and you don't want to be tempted? You must be prepared to be beaten by Satan every morning. You know the life of Christ? He was tempted, but He was the Son of God, so He couldn't be overcome by temptation, but I don't think that we are Sons of God, are we? We are the sons of a father who himself was an ordinary man. We are the sons of a father who himself was very much limited. What can you expect from this man, this ordinary man? Buddha was also tempted by satanic influences, they call it Mar, but he was very strong.

Whenever you want to take sannyasa you are ready for it, but if you go to many swamis they will not give you sannyasa because they are not prepared to share your follies. I consider my disciples as my children and I consider myself their mother, not father. Father gives one slap, mother gives one kiss, because mother is symbolic of eternal forgiveness. Therefore, whatever my sannyasins are, they are dearest to me and those who have worn this geru dress even for one night, I consider to be blessed.

How much I envy the good fortune of these little kids who come here with geru robes. At the age of three, at the age of four, they are exposed to this transcendental philosophy. We grown-up people, when we were young, all we used to listen to was 'London bridge is falling down', or 'Jack and Jill went up the hill'. Our exposure was very ordinary, but these little kiddies who come here, their exposure is philosophical, academic, technical.

Suppose you once took sannyasa by mistake and then you have married a beautiful girl, what harm is there? Is marriage sin? If it is sin then you are all sinners. If it is good, good; you are good people, and if I marry, I am also a good man. A sannyasin will produce a higher quality child because

his awareness is great, his philosophy is great. He has strived for many years as a sannyasin, as a swami. Of course I have crossed the threshold of sixty years. Had it occurred to me at the age of thirty-five I would definitely have produced one child. It did not come to my mind at all. Of course now it is too late.

Recently I have heard a lot about tattwa shuddhi. What is it exactly?

Many times you hear about tantric rites. They say, "He is tantric, he teaches tantra." Tattwa shuddhi is a tantric practice. This practice is important, especially for those who are practising kriya yoga. It purifies the subtle elements which constitute this body and, after tattwa shuddhi, when the higher yoga practices are taken up, the obstacles are just a few.

I understand enlightenment as transcending the personality. How does kundalini relate to this?

Kundalini is the dormant force in everybody, it is the forthcoming consciousness in human beings and this forthcoming consciousness in human beings will take place in very great numbers. Your children will be born having an awakened kundalini. You won't have to go to the ashrams then, because now we are teaching yoga to millions of people throughout the world.

Thousands and thousands of these swamis are spread throughout the world. We are a spiritual force, we are not any other force, and like this in a few years, in twenty years, in thirty years, one hundred, two hundred years, more and more children will be born with an awakened kundalini. When these children are born with an awakened kundalini, their personality will be different from all of us today. We have a lot of fears, passions and we are affected by disappointments. We are full of emotional and mental problems because our mind is not fully grown, our mind is undeveloped. When children will be born with

fully developed minds they won't have fears, they won't be insecure like ourselves, they will be full of love and friendliness towards everybody.

Now we don't believe everyone. If anybody comes to my house in the night I am not sure, he may be a robber or a dacoit. Because of fear we are not able to love everybody; because of passions we cannot love everybody. Our love is just very limited because we think, "If I love you, you may betray me." Therefore, the awakening of kundalini is the secret of a personality which is broad and unlimited.

Kundalini wakes up in stages and you can experience it in waves. One wave of experience comes and goes away. For months and years you do not have any experience, then another wave can come. Sometimes these waves of kundalini come in the form of sexual passion, sometimes in the form of very violent behaviour. Sometimes these waves of kundalini come to you as they came to Rasputin, sometimes they come to you as they came to Buddha and others. Saint Teresa of Avila used to get these waves, it came to her in the form of sickness. To some it comes in the form of madness; they behave like an insane person. To some they come as they did to St. Francis of Assisi or to Ramakrishna Paramahansa. This wave is experienced by different people in different ways. You feel completely different, you don't feel the same thing.

When this kundalini reaches the pinnacle, the ultimate point of perfection, then it gives you enlightenment. It makes you sober, it makes you steady and so therefore you see that many times these people are like very good gentlemen. Therefore, it is important that those people who are having experiences of kundalini, or those who want to awaken kundalini or those who are desirous of practising kundalini yoga, must get themselves attached to one guru, because he will tell you why it is happening.

Many disciples come to me and they say they are having so more sexual problems after practising kundalini yoga. They feel very guilty about it. If I were not there, they

would go mad. I tell them, “Look here, it’s just natural. Let it happen.” After some time they find out, “Well I was all right.” Sometimes people who get these waves of kundalini want to eat and eat like an Epicurean. I tell them, “It is perfectly okay”, otherwise they have a lot of complexes about themselves.

A guru is necessary to explain these symptoms of awakening kundalini. Awakening of kundalini is directly associated with your inner and outer behaviour.

Sometimes, when one is studying a lot, it is very difficult to concentrate on mantra. Is there some way we can hold on more to the awareness?

A beginner should study also, but at the same time it is only by constant, relentless practise that the awareness of the mantra will become constant. This constant, relentless awareness of mantra should be developed gradually.

You emphasize the importance of the outer guru, but what happens if I have a big problem and you are far away?

A disciple, before he begins his yoga practices each day, must first remember his guru. In the night when he sleeps he should also remember him. In this way he can maintain contact with the spirit of the guru, irrespective of the distance.

What happens when one loses faith, something enters the mind and says, “This is not my guru”?

It’s perfectly all right; you can lose faith in your guru. You can abuse him. You can criticize him, but keep him as your guru. That’s one thing, because if you divorce one guru you will divorce another guru also.

The idea, “I don’t have faith in my guru”, is the idea of your lower mind. This suggestion is given to you by your petty mind. You don’t want to have faith in your guru, but you have faith in your mind? So, you must do the right thing. What is the right thing? Number one, “My guru is a rascal,

a very bad man. I don't like him, I hate him, but on Guru Poornima I surrender myself to him", and one day you will find out that what I told you just now was correct and right.

I'll give you a parallel example. In India one husband and one wife live together until death. They fight every day. They should every day. For sixty years they fight. Sometimes he does not eat, sometimes she does not eat. Sometimes she doesn't cook food. Sometimes she does not talk to him for days together. Sometimes she runs away to her parents, but they live together as husband and wife. That is their definition of love.

Now, another side. Husband and wife: she gets angry and he gets angry, and they divorce immediately. Then he is a divorcee and she is divorced. She becomes statusless and he becomes statusless. You see, husband-hood is a status and wife-hood is a status. Then after two or three years he falls in love with another girl and she with another man; then you call it my present husband and ex-husband. I call it assassination of emotions. You have killed your emotions. You are a murderer and you are going to be a murderer again and again and again.

Therefore, in spiritual life there is no question of divorcing that man. As a disciple you have a right to abuse him, to criticize him or, if you want, print it in the newspaper or print books about him. Write down everything against him and circulate it to all the people, because nobody will purchase it. Talk badly against him twenty-four hours a day, that is another side of *bhakti* or devotion. A person whom you love, you think about all the time. A person whom you hate terribly, you think about twenty-four hours a day.

What is important? Total awareness of guru is important. A good guru is not important. Thinking of a bad guru is important and thinking of a good guru is also important, but remember a very important point. If your guru is very good, the awareness will not be very deep. If your guru is bad, your awareness is going to be very deep. Now what kind of awareness do you want? Do you want light awareness or

do you want deep awareness? I remember my enemy more than my friend. I am affected by my enemy more than by my friend. Therefore guru is a guru for the whole lifetime and a disciple remains a disciple for the whole lifetime. Nothing can change this relationship. This unbroken relationship will follow you life after life.

Do you think I have come here just by accident? No, it is predestined. I am a part of your karma and you are a part of my karma. In many lives we have lived together. In many, many lives we have had interactions with one another, and it is through that law of karma that we come to each other and not by accident. I can give you thousands of examples from my interactions with people in this life. There is an unseen law and that law is called the law of cause and effect, and it is equally applicable to each and every substance, to each and every object in this universe.

Therefore, through this law of cause and effect we have come to each other on this Guru Poornima eve. I do not consider this to be a sort of accident, so let us consider that we have lived together very many times and we have loved each other many times. So, in this life, even if you criticize me and abuse me, I don't mind because my guru told me that one who insults you and criticizes you, or who disregards you, is your best friend.

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Guru Poornima Day

Satyanandashram, Paiania, 2 July 1985

Today is Guru Poornima. From the dark night, now today is full moon. In the same way, from ignorance, we should try to experience full enlightenment. Enlightenment is the fundamental right of everybody. Those who have renounced and those who have not renounced, both are qualified. Those who are very good people and those who are very bad people, all are qualified for enlightenment.

There are only two conditions for enlightenment. The first condition is faith that you will be enlightened. The second: my guru is within me. Everybody has a guru, but people do not know it and therefore, first of all, they start with the external guru. In the course of time you will realize that I am not here; I am in you. This morning you worshipped your inner guru through the external guru. Whatever worship you did this morning you did it to yourself, but it appeared that you were worshipping somebody else.

Flowers symbolize the most tender emotion in man called bhakti. Money and gold represent all the trifling things you have within you. So, to guru, what did you offer? You offered your heart, that is, the flowers. A flower is the most beautiful thing in the world, the most tender thing and bhakti is like that. Devotion and *bhakti* are the same. It is like the beautiful

flowers that you offered this morning. Then you offered the money. Money is the most trivial thing in life, the creator of all problems. It changes man from something to something. It is the centre of passion and greed. It is the vitamin for your ego, and that you offered this morning. So a disciple offers the best and the worst. The best means the flower, the worst means the money, and guru receives both, just like a good clean river and a dirty river both mingle in the ocean.

In Greece, this Guru Poornima is being celebrated for the second time. It is a gathering of sincere seekers and we hope to be here again from time to time. We are thankful to Swami Sivamurti and other sannyasins who have arranged for this spiritual feast. All of you must come to the ashram from time to time. You must have a small ashram in your own country and in your own city.

Ashrams must be the most simple places and ashrams should be dedicated to spiritual practice. Every person, every nationality should be able to come to the ashram and in your own humble way you must maintain what I would call the simplicity of the ashram. You should not create many rituals because ashram is a lower middle-class culture. We are not bourgeois, but lower middle-class, you understand: factory workers, labourers, chemists. Of course, big industrialists come, but when they come they must live here like the small people because in an ashram there is no social and economic difference.

Those who believe in God can come to the ashram and those who are atheists should also come to the ashram, because an atheist also has mental problems. An atheist may not believe in God; it's all right, but he needs peace of mind, he needs sanity, he needs a one-pointed mind and a strong body, that's all. He should come to yoga. Therefore, an ashram should not be only for religious people, but also for those who are not religious.

Sannyasins must try to walk one step further every time because there is a very great responsibility on the swamis. They are the moving ambassadors of peace, I mean mental

peace. Karma sannyasins must work for the growth of the ashram and the senior swamis must also realize that they have a great work to do.

That's all I have to say this morning to you all. Those of you who have come from France and Italy, Spain, England, Yugoslavia, Sweden, Switzerland, etc., should now carry this inspiration to your respective countries and create some sort of ashram in your country. Let people come forward for sannyasa and karma sannyasa. Respect all systems, all philosophies and all religions, that is the only way for growth in spiritual life.

If you want, you can go to church on Sunday. If you want, you can read the Koran. If you like, you can read the *Gita* and Upanishads. All these are good things. You should see no difference in the different paths and that is how you go ahead in spiritual life.



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Tattwa Shuddhi

Satyanandashram, Paiania, 4 July 1985

This particular practice should have been revealed by me many years before, but it could not be done. A particular sadhana is revealed only through a disciple who has been able to practise it and derive its benefits. Even as my guru taught me kriya yoga, he revealed the practise, in the same way, through Swami Satsangi, the practice of tattwa shuddhi is being revealed to all.

Tattwa shuddhi is a tantric practice. You may safely say it is not a yoga practice. In tantric sadhana the purification of the basic elements of the body and the mind is essential. Even as in yoga practices, shatkarmas are taught in order to purify the body, in the same way, in all tantric practices, whether left-hand or right-hand tantra, the practice of tattwa shuddhi is a prerequisite.

There has been a complete misunderstanding, especially in the West, that tantra is for all because it allows you to do all that your religion does not permit. They think that in tantric practice you can drink, you can have sexual intercourse, you can smoke hashish and cigarettes, anything, because they misunderstand. It is true that there have been certain tantric teachers who have used five elements, the *pancha tattwa*, for their practices. Because tantra talks about some such things which are thoroughly misunderstood and

misused by the people, tantric practices, occultism, need absolute discipline, more than yoga demands.

Self control

Sexual intercourse by one who has self-control and sexual intercourse by one who has no control of himself are two different things. Sitting for deep meditation and having one or two puffs of hashish is an entirely different thing from standing out in the car park and smoking. What is the difference? Do you know? Do you understand? The difference is just this much: one has absolute control over himself and the other has no control over himself. Therefore, for the people who do not have self-discipline, who do not have control over the processes of their body and mind, this *tattwa shuddhi* is very important.

This physical body is controlled by the five *tattwas*, five primitive elements, and if the five elements are purified by certain practices, then it will eventually give you a pure body and a pure mind. When the body is purified in its elemental stage and when the mind is purified in its elemental stage, then the feelings and the experience are completely different.

When we use the words, 'purification of the body' we must understand it differently. Bathing is also an act of purification of the body. Shankhaprakshalana and other hatha yoga kriyas are also acts of purification of the body. Intake of pure food, pure air, pure water are also acts of purification of the body, but then the physical body is so much more than that which we understand about it.

We are talking about the physical body in its molecular form; not merely talking about circulation, respiration and secretion, enzymes, hydrochloric acid, chemicals, hormones. We are not talking about the alpha, delta, beta or theta waves. We are talking about that particular realm of the body which is composed of the tiniest molecules, ones which you cannot see even through your ordinary microscopes.

The molecular structure of the body is the basis of human genetics. If you know how to change it you become

something else. A criminal can become a saint tomorrow. An ordinary robber can become a prophet. A total change in the structure of the body, a total change in the structure of the intellect, a total change in the personality structure takes place. Modern scientists are talking about the science of genetics. If you want your son to become an engineer you take a gene and get it injected. If you want your son to become a swami and a guru and a prophet, a messiah, well, inject that. It is not a joke! It is something which the scientists are talking about today.

The subtle bodies

If you can study molecular biology then you can understand the tattwas better. Do you know that even outside the physical body there is also a physical body where atoms are just bouncing? These powerful atoms which are just bouncing out of the physical body in millions and millions, outside then inside, what do you call them? Do you call them your body or do you call them something else? So the physical body must be properly understood when you are practising yoga and when you are practising tantra, or any higher practice for that matter.

Mystics in the East and in the medieval West used to speak about the body. In the pre-Christian Celtic culture they used to talk about ten bodies which were intrinsically connected with each other. Of course, we have the visible, physical body, the other body you can't see, but scientists, saints and scholars have spoken about it. In tattwa shuddhi you will be able to understand how to handle this molecular and subtle body.

You can influence your body by an injection, you can influence your body through aroma, fragrance, through visual form, through sounds, music, etc. Certainly you can influence your body by a thought, by a feeling, or through belief or disbelief, through your fears and finally you can influence your body by going into deep meditation. So, if a thought can influence your body, thoughtlessness also can. These

statements which I have made just now are not something which I am talking about from my own side, but they are conclusions from the findings of scientists these days.

The five elements which constitute the physical body relate to various colours, they are symbolised by certain geometrical formations, by certain sounds and by certain emotions, therefore you should not think that this body is just solid matter. One aspect of the body is solid matter, but there is another aspect which is not solid, which is transparent.

Enlightenment

Do you know that within this body thousands and thousands and thousands of suns can shine at the same time? I remember a note from the diary of the famous scientist Dr Robert Oppenheimer who was the first scientist to conduct a nuclear explosion, in South America. The place where the experiment was conducted is known in Spanish as the 'Desert of Death'. When the first explosion took place, Dr Oppenheimer was watching it from sixty kilometres away. Immediately he took out his diary and wrote in it a verse from the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Dr Oppenheimer was a great Sanskrit scholar. Do you know how that verse reads? It is in the eleventh chapter of *Bhagavad Gita*, when Arjuna had a terrible experience. In the middle of the battle the commander in chief of the army is having a terrible spiritual experience and *Gita* describes it thus:

Even as thousands and thousands of suns would shine
in the sky at the same time, that would be the brilliance
of one who had enlightened the self.

Can you believe your body has the capacity of enlightenment of one thousand suns at the same time? Can you believe that in your physical body there is a point which somehow, if it is triggered, can shine like a thousand suns at the same time?

The necessity of purification

The purpose of tattwa shuddhi is to render the body pure to this extent. Of course, other forms of purification are also essential, but other forms of purification are limited if tattwa shuddhi is not done. Yogis and tantrics develop psychic powers and this achievement of psychic power is unpredictable. We can't say at what time, at what point, people will have it. One may go on for forty-five, fifty, sixty years and not get anything or one might get it in a year or two.

Who is going to handle you? An impure man with psychic power becomes a Rasputin and there have been many powerful people in this world who have attained this psychic power and have been terrors to humanity. Therefore, it is the duty of guru and the duty of disciple to practise all acts of purification so that you may achieve maximum possible control over your lower emotions of body and mind.

People with great discipline and self-control don't lose that control even if they are crucified. This was the philosophy of Christ and Gandhi. Because they had a supreme amount of self-control, they did not misuse their spiritual powers against their adversaries. Also, sometimes, with an impure mind, when you practise sadhana you begin to have nightmares, so this tattwa shuddhi will help you a great deal.

Requirements for sadhana

I did want to teach tattwa shuddhi for so many years, but I couldn't find anyone to reveal it properly. When I was in Australia, Swami Satsangi was with me, and in Australia the place where I live is the ashram. It is in total wilderness. The nearest post-office, twenty-six miles; nearest shop, twenty miles; nearest road, twelve miles. You can see big pythons the whole day and kangaroos. It is such a wild place, day and night you can hear nobody except the people who live in the ashram.

Those who live in the ashram will testify to my statement. You can ask Swami Sivamurti. Nobody is going to stay near the ashram for the next hundred years. Many people have purchased land next to the ashram, but when they saw those

big pythons and that red-bellied snake they just ran away. In our ashram we keep a carpet snake in the storeroom because it doesn't allow rats to survive. Many people who go into the storeroom meet the snake and don't come back a second time.

The people who had purchased the land sold it to us at a throwaway price. We thought vegetables would be nice for the ashram because in the Australian headquarters we have weekend seminars; would you believe me if I told you the numbers? Every Saturday evening the ashram is full and every Monday morning it is empty, so these swamis grow vegetables for the weekend seminar people. They produced so many vegetables we didn't know what to do with them. So, we have about twenty-six or thirty ashrams in Australia and we began to send the vegetables to them in trucks. Still we couldn't manage because these Australian swamis stayed on the plot the whole day and night by putting up a tent. They grew soya beans, onion, garlic, cucumber, Chinese spinach, ladies fingers. Finally we had to put it in cold storage so we could put all the vegetables there. They are now sold through the ashrams like books, records and cassettes.

This is a hint for the swamis of this ashram also. If you will not do it you will have problems. Some girl will run after you or you will smoke packet after packet. If you want to overcome passions, if you want to overcome addictions, if you want to simplify your life, if you want to be free from guilt and shame, pick up the hint from me.

In such an ashram I taught tattwa shuddhi to Swami Satsangi and when I used to teach her tattwa shuddhi, she used to look up at the trees to see if there was a python hanging, like the sword of Damocles, you know. Actually, when the tattwa shuddhi seminar was going on, every day one python used to fall down. Those pythons are very beautiful and friendly. I put one on my shoulders. Of course she was scared, but sat down and we took a photograph also. They are harmless creatures, they are a part of nature, they are a member of the family. Of course, sometimes there is a rowdy member of the family. Well, you can ask Swami Satsangi about

her mental problems, with emotions up and down, at that time when I was teaching her tattwa shuddhi. With eyes closed she used to listen to me: “*Lam, vam, ram* – python!”

In tantra there are four important places for sadhana. Please do not try them. One is in the cemetery where bodies are cremated. If you go there in the night you will be shivering terribly out of fear, especially if there is a jackal going, “Oooooooo!” or if there is a ferocious dog. The second place is in front of a young and beautiful girl. Sit down next to her, concentrate and don’t break your meditation. Of course she should also practise, otherwise, you are a yogi, you have no problems, but she is going to have problems. She will become hysterical, she will beat her husband or her child or somebody. The third place is a wild forest with no man visible. You can expect a scorpion, a rattlesnake, tiger, or any one of your family. It can devour you or maybe stand quite close to you and say, “What a funny man, he is not moving at all.” The fourth place is a solitary temple or church. Swami Satsangi had the choice of the third place.

I do not know how far she has overcome her fear about the members of her own family, but definitely she is an outstanding and exclusive yoga teacher in tattwa shuddhi. She will give you lessons in three stages. First she will explain, then she will lead you in the practice, then if you have any difficulties in understanding the explanation, she will answer your questions. It will be necessary for you to read the book, *Tattwa Shuddhi*.

I hope that all of you have not minded my sarcastic remarks. I don’t intend to withdraw my remarks and I hope they will mend many of your philosophical distractions. I don’t mind if my disciples drink, even if they are promiscuous. I don’t care, even if they drink poison I don’t mind, but I would prefer that they don’t do it. However, in spite of all this, I will have the same relationship with them and no change in my relationships with you. A mother does not change her relationship to her children despite their idiosyncrasies, but she does expect that they are not idiots.



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